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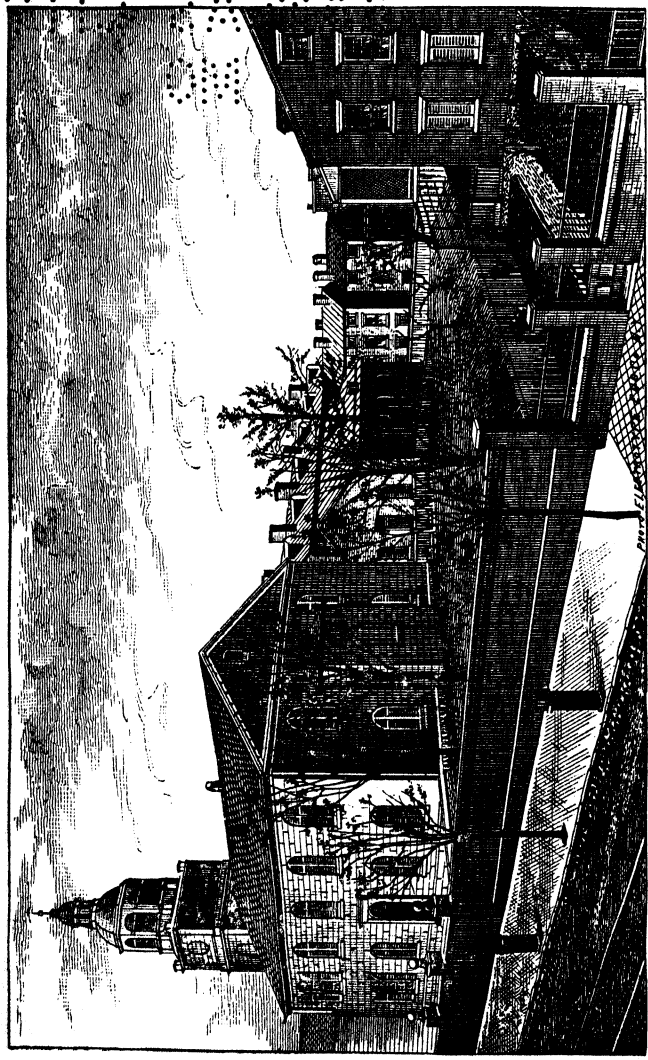
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OTTERBEIN'S CHURCH.

PRESENT PARSONAGE.

THE LIFE

OF

Rev. Philip William Otterbein,

FOUNDER OF THE

Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

BY

REV. A. W. DRURY, A. M.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

BISHOP J. WEAVER, D. D.

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DAYTON, OHIO:  
UNITED BRETHREN PUBLISHING HOUSE.  
1890.


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By REV. W. J. SHUEY.

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## PREFACE.

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 Only remains for me to give statement to a few points by way of preface to what is herewith presented as the Life of Otterbein. The designation given, it is conceded, is in various respects unsuitable. Many things essential or important to the true life-history of Otterbein are irrecoverably lost, or survive only in imperfect outlines; and some things to which space in the following pages is given may seem to include too wide a circle about him to be consistent with the title used. It might be more fit if the materials here given should pass under the character of a memorial volume—a volume of the extant facts—on the life and career of Otterbein.

In my work I have constantly been compelled to struggle with the meagerness of material, and in some parts with the uncertainty and conflict of testimony.

I have sought to honor facts, and to allow them to make their own impression and impart their own coloring. From the endeavor to give to facts this place, various consequences follow. The difficulty of tracing a faintly-marked line of facts almost necessarily excludes literary attractiveness.

Likewise an unflinching devotion to historical truth may excite, on controverted points, the charge of want of charity, if not of want of fairness; while, perhaps in regard to the same points, others may feel that too much has been conceded. In regard to these and kindred points I have only

## PREFACE.

to say that, while I have sought to avoid all approach to rashness, I have not suffered myself to be influenced by the fear of criticism. The cause of truth is best served by the positive presentation of facts.

It was my first intention to give numerous foot-notes as to sources and evidences; but from the fact that much of the material employed was gathered from sources other than books, and in view of the apparent pedantry of such notes in a work of this kind, only a few citations of authorities in the form of notes are made.

I have admitted many quotations, some of them being quite extended. This has not been to save work, but to give the reader an opportunity to use his own judgment, and to catch for himself the spirit of the prominent actors, and gain a living impression of the times.

In addition to the attention given to the relations of the particular subjects presented to general church-history, special attention has been given to contemporary denominational history in the United States, particularly in the Reformed, Mennonite, and Methodist lines.

On the histories of the United Brethren in Christ by Spayth and Lawrence respectively, a remark will be in place. Starting out skeptical as to some of the points presented in these histories, I have been impelled carefully to examine all of the statements contained that have a bearing on the subjects presented in this work; and the conclusion reached is decidedly in favor of the general accuracy of these writers. Mr. Spayth's opportunities were rare. He visited both Otterbein and Boehm with a view to obtain from them facts as to their lives. His few mistakes as to facts are confined to matters in regard to which he could not have full information at hand. Mr. Lawrence, while giving much of the same material as Mr. Spayth, went over the ground independently,

and had the advantage of some sources not open to his predecessor.

In some of the parts in which the following work seems merely to copy from the histories named, I have had the advantage of the sources back of these histories. In addition to this, Mr. Lawrence has kindly indicated to me the particular sources for those gatherings for his history that were obtained from personal testimonies. Thus, in different ways, I have had an opportunity to exercise a careful personal judgment as to a number of facts that I may seem to be simply transferring to my own pages.

Of assistance rendered by Rev. F. W. Cuno of Hanover, Germany, I make a grateful acknowledgment. Pastor Cuno is the author of a number of works on historical and antiquarian subjects. He has written a considerable number of articles on the Otterbein family. These articles, together with much information communicated to me directly, have been, in the preparation of the first two chapters and of some other parts, of the greatest service. His esteem for the Otterbeins—among them William Otterbein—is of a character at the same time gratifying and remarkable.

Dr. J. H. Dubbs, of the Reformed Church, by direct correspondence and through his published articles, has placed me under the highest obligations to him. On matters pertaining to the Reformed Church in the United States no one is better informed than he.

Levi Reist, Esq., of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, has rendered great service in relation to the history of the Mennonites. Mr. Reist has a rare genius for facts, and has had exceptional opportunities for acquainting himself with early Mennonite history.

To many kind friends I owe a debt of acknowledgment. Of those not already named, I can only take space to name



H. B. Stehman, M. D., of Chicago, Illinois, Mr. Jacob Knipp, jr., of Baltimore, Maryland, and Rev. Wm. Mittendorf of Dayton, Ohio.

With the hope that this book may contribute something toward the perpetuation and extension of the vital, aggressive Christianity with which the name of Otterbein is so prominently associated, it is hereby submitted to the Christian public.

A. W. DRURY.

DECEMBER, 1884.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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O species of writing," says Dr. Johnson, "seems more worthy of cultivation than biography, since none can be more delightful and useful. None can more certainly enchain the heart by irresistible interests, or more widely diffuse instruction to every diversity of condition." To treasure up memorials of the wise, the learned, and the virtuous is not only helpful to the mind, but is an exalted duty we owe to the living and the dead. In a very broad sense biography may be considered the soul of history. Nothing in the whole field of literature can surpass a well-written biography of a wise, learned, and good man.

The history of the Presbyterian Church would be sadly marred if we should drop from its pages the names of Calvin, Knox, Baxter, Doddridge, Henry, Campbell, Stewart, Witherspoon, and others. The wisdom, virtue, learning, and labors of these devout men, cast a light all along down through the history of that church. Many a life has been ennobled by the remembrance of the noble deeds of such men of God. The history of the Methodist Church would lose much of its interest and power for good if the names of Wesley, Whitefield, Fletcher, Clark, Watson, and Asbury were dropped from its



pages. Take from the history of the Baptist Church such names as Gale, Gill, Bunyan, Robinson, Stennett, Booth, Fuller, Hall, and others of like learning and piety, and but few would care to read the history of that church. So we may say of any church that has become historic. The Bible is composed largely of the history of eminent men and women, of whose names the eleventh chapter of Hebrews gives a partial list. Drop from the sacred pages the history of the lives of Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Ruth, Esther, David, Daniel, Paul, Peter, John, and a host of other like characters, and you take from the Bible much of its richness and grandeur. Whether, therefore, we speak of a nation, a church, or the Bible, it is proper to say that biography is the soul of history. The writers of the lives of good men and women ought to be considered as the friends and benefactors of humanity. Nothing sheds a richer luster along the pathway of virtue than a well-written life of one of God's saints. What can be more beautiful than the last lines of Luke's biographical sketch of Barnabas: "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord."

There is no field of literature into which we may enter where we shall find more striking proofs of the doctrine of divine providence than that of biography. The history of good men and women, properly understood, is a history of the ways of Providence, as well as a history of the triumphs of grace. It is strikingly true in the history of all the ages past, that when God wanted a man for a certain purpose he has raised him up. God wanted a man to lead his people out of the bondage of Egypt, and raised up Moses. He wanted a man for a missionary among the gentiles, and raised up Paul. God raised up and fitted these men for their work by controlling the circumstances around them. The history

of the lives of Luther, Calvin, Wesley, and other "leaders of our church universal," is but a glimpse into the history of a wonder-working Providence. So also in the case of Philip William Otterbein, founder of the church of the United Brethren in Christ, God wanted a man to awaken the Germans in America, and so raised up Otterbein.

In studying the lives of men it is well to obtain as clear views of their real character as possible. This is one special object in writing and studying biography; but it is not the only purpose. "We do not err in that we find too much in the persons whom we study, but in that we find too little of Him who is everywhere, and everywhere at work." A good man has well said that "God foreseeing what will be needed at a particular juncture, selects and prepares the means he designs to use. His plans and purposes for the most part are hidden from the world; even those whom he intends to use are not aware of the part they are to perform." When Luther was quietly pursuing his studies at Erfurt, he knew nothing of the work that was before him. God alone knew, and directed and controlled the circumstances which brought about the result. So in the lives of all the Reformers; not one of them knew in advance the part he was to perform.

Philip William Otterbein was a child of Providence, as will be clearly seen by those who read and study the pages of this book. The author has carefully collected together, and arranged in proper order, facts in the life of this great and good man that unmistakably show that God raised him up for a certain great purpose. When Mr. Otterbein was pursuing his course of study at Herborn, and when in 1749 he was solemnly ordained to the office of an elder, it does not appear to have entered into his mind that at a future time, and in a foreign land, he would organize an independent church. When he sailed for America as a missionary, he

came not to be the founder of an independent church, but to labor under the auspices of an old and established church. Some years after his settlement as pastor in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, he was brought into communion with Christ. Up to this time he had not known Christ as a personal Savior. Soon after his conversion he commenced his evangelistic labors, not with a view of organizing a new and independent church, but to awaken those who were already identified with the visible church. Thus step by step Mr. Otterbein was led into a way that he had not known, and would not himself have selected. It was only when a combination of circumstances, over which he had no control, compelled him to organize an independent church that he consented to do so. Facts all along this line will be clearly seen when reading and studying the pages of this book. "God's doings in the history of his church on earth" are but a history of his doings with individual members of his church. In studying biography, therefore, we study the operations of divine Providence as manifest in the history of the church militant.

No species of composition possesses more interest than a well-written biography of a good man. Such a book, like the "sunlight and rain," is the common property of all. To make such a book, the author has spared no pains in gathering together facts and incidents all along the life of Mr. Otterbein. Fact rather than philosophy has been the aim of the author in the preparation of the pages of this book. Many facts and incidents are brought out, especially in relation to the family and early life of Mr. Otterbein, which will be very interesting to his spiritual children. Sketches of his life may be found in the histories of the church, and elsewhere; but in no form or place has his life been written as in this book. The style of the author is easy and dignified. There does not appear to be any effort at display; no rhet-

orical flourishes; simply a statement of facts and incidents connected with the life and labors of one of the greatest and best men of his times.

More than a hundred and thirty years have passed since Mr. Otterbein commenced his labors in America. He was here before, and during the Revolutionary War; but whether in war or in peace, he was the same scholarly, Christian divine—a man of God and a man for the people. Bishop Asbury of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who was intimately acquainted with Mr. Otterbein, proposed to him a long list of questions, all of which were carefully answered by Mr. Otterbein except the last one, which was this: “Will you give any commandment concerning your bones, and the memoirs of your life? Your children in Christ will not suffer you to die unnoticed.” Scholarly and dignified, but too sensitive and modest to answer this question, Mr. Otterbein was willing to leave his name, character, and reputation in the hands of Him in whom he had trusted for more than three-score years. Bishop Asbury, who read character and life with as keen a vision as any man of his times, and whose pen was never more gifted than when describing noble character and self-sacrificing endeavor, has thrown imperishable garlands about the name of Otterbein. The life and labors of a man thus honored by men of his own times should be carefully written and preserved. There were characteristics in the life of this devout man of God that should never be lost, but should be handed down from one generation to another.

The author of this book, with much labor and wise discrimination, has collected and arranged in proper order many of the most important facts and incidents connected with the life and labors of Mr. Otterbein. The “Life” presented is not a dry and insipid history of a man that belonged to a remote age. It is a life-picture of a man who though

dead, yet speaks — a man whose life-spirit lives in the hearts of multitudes to-day. The memory of such a life as Otterbein lived and of the work he performed should never be lost. I therefore commend this volume to all who love to read the history of the lives of good men.

J. WEAVER.

**OTTERBEIN.**



# L I F E

OF


## REV. PHILIP WILLIAM OTTERBEIN.

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### CHAPTER I.

LIFE TO HIS ENTRANCE UPON THE HOLY MINISTRY.

Nassau — Dillenburg — Otterbein Family — Home Training —  
Death of the Father — A Quotation — Brothers and Sisters —  
In School at Herborn — Character of Instructors.

HE life and labors of Rev. Philip William Otterbein, in more respects than one, were of a solitary character. His is the only one of his family name that, by reason of eminent services, has obtained a place in the annals of our country. He labored among the Germans, who had not, at the early period at which he labored, obtained a recognized relation to our growing population. The dust from the pinions of time has been falling for full seventy years on the events of his completed life; and the gray distance of nearly double that period spreads



a veil over his childhood and early manhood in the fatherland. Thus there is only left to us—what shall we say?—the solitary form of an honored saint.

It will scarcely be grateful to some to have this form exchanged, even to the extent that, at this late day, it can be done, for one more truly human, and toilsomely contending amidst the circumstances of ordinary life. Yet if the holy dead are to inspire and instruct us by their saintly lives and heroic struggles, their real likeness to ourselves, in all essential respects, must be made apparent. This is the marked characteristic of the biographies that are traced for us in Holy Writ.

But what features are necessary to such a presentation? Instinctively we look for country, kindred, associates, education, the early heart-strivings, and the sustained after-conflict.

Nassau,\* the country in Germany to which we now turn our attention as the home of the Otterbein family, is at present included as a part of the Prussian province of Hesse-Nassau. The name

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\* In 1255 Nassau was divided into two parts, and from that time was ruled by two lines of counts, which lines became divided at times into several parallel branches. At an early time the younger line obtained important possessions in the Netherlands. In 1544, William, the heir of this line, called William the Silent, fell heir to the principality of Orange, and important possessions in Holland, and elsewhere. By reason of his estates in Holland, he came to be closely connected with the affairs of that country, and at length the founder of its independence. About 1580 William resigned

now given to it on the map is Wiesbaden. It is bounded on the north by Westphalia, on the east by the provinces of ancient Hesse, and on the south and west, for the most part, by the Main and Rhine. It extends over an area of 1,808 square miles, and in 1866 had a population of 468,311, the majority of the number being Protestants. In the south the country is quite mountainous, and in the north, in some parts, it is high and barren. The valleys are very productive. A number of streams traverse the country. The country is rich in minerals, and is specially noted for its mineral springs. The inhabitants derived, in past times, great advantages from the physical characteristics of the country; and their relations, which were specially intimate with the Netherlands, and the Rhine countries even to the mountains of Switzerland, gave them broad intercourse and a stimulating outlook. In early times the older Nassau line gave an emperor to Germany, but in later times the younger line, through the so-called Orange princes, reached a higher celebrity.

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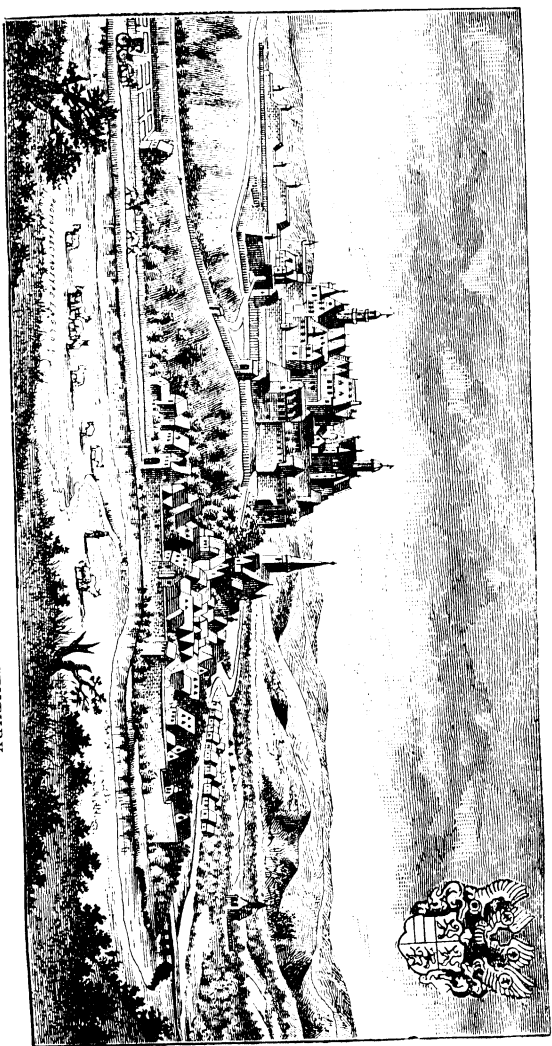
his paternal inheritance in Nassau to his brothers, and there came to be several princes of the younger line ruling over the different parts of Orange Nassau. The count of Nassau-Dillenburg was one of the most important of these princes. His capital was, of course, Dillenburg. About 1740 the different possessions of the younger line were again united under a single ruler, and the prince of this line became, in 1815, king of the Netherlands. Orange Nassau, in 1815, was united with the possessions of the older line, which in 1806 had been formed by Napoleon into a dukedom.

In this favored land, in the ancient and picturesque city of Dillenburg, on the 3d\* day of June, 1726, Philip William Otterbein was born. Dillenburg lay on a sloping elevation overlooking the wild-running river Dille. Just above the town stood a noble ancient castle, the birthplace and residence of an illustrious line of counts. Here William the Silent was born. The castle was destroyed in 1760, and in its place there has recently been erected a lofty tower in memory of the distinguished patriot just named. Dillenburg contained in the middle of the eighteenth century some over three thousand inhabitants. It was noted for its Latin school, female seminary, mines, and mineral springs.

It is not only gratifying that we are able to know something of the Otterbein family in Germany, but it is an unmeasured pleasure to find that the knowledge that may be gained is at the same time honorable, and calculated to instruct

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\* A number of different dates have been given for the birth of Otterbein. I. D. Rupp, Esq., in the books written by him, gives November 6th, 1726. Rev. H. G. Spayth gives March 6th, 1726. The date given in the Baltimore daily at the time of his death was June 2d, 1726. June 4th, 1726, occurs in the inscription on his tomb. The authority back of June 4th as the date is an incidental mention that occurs in a letter of recommendation given by the faculty at Herborn, when he became a missionary. To show, however, that the date incidentally given in the recommendation was not given by Otterbein himself, it is necessary to refer to but a single point. In the paper, where the maiden name of his mother should occur, a blank was left. The fact that he allowed the date, now found to be incorrect, to stand, is not



DILLENBURG IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.



and inspire. The earliest known ancestor of this family was the court-trumpeter John Otterbein, who came, about 1650, from Salzschlirf, near Fulda, to Dillenburg. He was married in 1658 to Agnes Deichman, whose grandfather had fled from Siegen, on account of persecution, in the beginning of the seventeenth century. To these parents were born two sons, one of whom was Charles Frederick, born in 1667. He married Anna Christina Hatzfeldt, the daughter of the pastor at Driedorf. With Charles Frederick, and from his time, the family assumed its ministerial character, which it afterward maintained with great and steady luster. Two of his six children became pastors.

John Daniel, the older of these, and the oldest of the family, was born September 6th, 1696. He was married November 28th, 1719, to Miss Wilhelmina Henrietta, the accomplished daughter of John Jacob Hoerlen. In a paper proceeding from the faculty of the Herborn school, she is called

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stranger than that he should not have filled the blank. The following entry taken from the Dillenburg church-record is decisive in favor of June 3d: "To Mr. John Daniel Otterbein, preceptori primario (rector) of the Latin school, and Mrs. Wilhelmina Henrietta, were born twins on the 3d of June, early in the morning at 2 o'clock. The older is a son, and the second a daughter. Both were baptized on the 6th of June; the godfather for the son was Philip William Keller, steward of the kitchen (Kuechenmeister) to the court; the godmother for the second, wife of Mr. John Martin Keller, butler (Kellermeister) to the court. The son was called Philip William, and the daughter Anna Margaret."

“the right noble and very virtuous woman, Wilhelmina Henrietta.” Of her high mental and moral endowments more will be said hereafter. These were the parents of Philip William Otterbein.

The father was called “the right reverend and very learned John Daniel Otterbein.” He studied at Herborn, and in 1718 became a candidate of the ministry. In 1719 he became a teacher in the Reformed Latin school at Dillenburg, of which he soon afterward became rector. In this position his learning, ability to instruct, and piety, at once gave him an honored place.

The house in Dillenburg in which he lived, and in which the older children were born, while respectable, was yet humble. The house stood close to the church, and also near to the building in which the Latin school was held. Not far distant was the family burying-vault of the princes. In this house Philip William was born. The house still stands\*,—such is the firmness with which the dwellings in Germany are constructed. History surely does not err in picturing to us a home of order and happiness for the family of the pious young rector. The home was soon gladdened by a full half-dozen bright young

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\* The house stands at the rear of the church near the castle,—now the tower.

faces; and soon, too, the sad light from two vacant places in the circle fell upon the hearts of the parents.

In the spring of 1728, John Daniel Otterbein became pastor of the congregations at Frohnhausen and Wissenbach. He thereupon moved to Frohnhausen, the principal place, situated about three miles north of Dillenburg. At that time, in Germany, a minister and his family were held in high esteem by the people. The family formed the kindly center for the parish. Here the younger children were born; and here, as the proper age was reached, the children received in their studies the faithful and skillful assistance of the father. By this home instruction they received not only their first impulse toward knowledge, but such a preparation as would enable them to enter schools of advanced grade.

The Reformed Church in Nassau made great account of the Heidelberg Catechism. The Otterbeins showed great partiality toward it, and among the famous catechisms it is doubtless, as regards elementary instruction in religion, the best. A considerable part of the duty of the parish minister was to inculcate the catechism. All children were obliged to become well acquainted with it, and after an examination, when about twelve years of age, were confirmed. They



were then admitted to communion and to all of the privileges of the church. Philip William doubtless met the catechetical class, consisting of the children of the parish and taught by his father, and in due time, with the others of his age, received confirmation.

In the light of what has already been given, we cease to wonder what the home training of young Philip William was. Every Otterbein whose name we have gives evidence that he was an Otterbein—was of the common stamp. The characteristic solidity, strength, and piety had no known exception. We must believe that this was not the result of accidental influence, or of influences external to the home. Nor can we believe that it came from mere inherent qualities.

We naturally turn, by contrast, to the defects of homes that are not so distant in time and place. The father, in many instances, lends not character and authority in the work of training. In other instances there is authority without love, and often rigor fitfully sustained. In still other cases the father is but the parody of a man, and allows himself by word and action to be seen as such by his children. If there is an unrestrained wag-element in the father, it will likely run away with the children. Many children receive no training—except when they have misbehaved.

If there is nothing in the parents to inspire reverence for a superior, and esteem for soberness and goodness, is it any wonder that the children are devoid of reverence and healthful appreciation? It is a sad fact, too, that much care is fruitless through want of wisdom and steady policy. Children, though responsible to the parents for a given time, are afterward to be thrown upon themselves; and if the voluntary principle of piety and right-doing is not implanted, the result need be to no one surprising. There is, too, a care that tends to produce callousness, moral distaste, and reaction.

In the Otterbein family there was a strong and healthful family spirit, extending beyond the immediate household. There were also hearty and liberal social sympathies. Thus were alliances brought to sustain a proper home-life, and to develop and ennoble personal and social character.

The religious character of John Daniel Otterbein was sincere and decided. In the baptismal register at Frohnhausen, he wrote as follows: "Here I, J. D. O., begin in the name of the Triune God and will continue this work to his honor, which must be the nature of all our private as well as public deeds and acts."

In the marriage register he expressed himself in a similar manner: "*Deus Triunus, cui me et*

*omnia mea dicavi, faxit, ut initium meum sit pium, sanctum et salutare, quo actiones meae universae cedant ad sui nominis gloriam multorumque aedificationem in salutem.*" That is, "May the Triune God, to whom I have committed myself and all my possessions, grant that my beginning be pious, holy, and salutary, so that all my actions may redound to the honor of his name and the blessed edification of many."

But Mr. Otterbein's ministry, after a term of fourteen laborious and fruitful years, was by death abruptly brought to a close. He died November 14th, 1742, in the beginning of his forty-seventh year. His funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Schramm, "to a tearful audience," from Matthew, twenty-fourth chapter and forty-fifth and forty-sixth verses: "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

The following account written in 1802 for the *Nassau Chronicle* and *Vade Mecum*, by Mr. Steubing, counselor of the consistory, is deserving of space here—especially in consequence of its allusions to the different members of the family of John Daniel Otterbein:

At N. N. (Frohnhausen), in the principality of Dillenburg, during the second quarter of the previous century, there

was a minister who was much esteemed by his congregation. He was untiring in his efforts to fulfill the duties of his vocation; and in the circle of his family, which consisted of six sons and one daughter, he enjoyed every possible domestic happiness. Being formerly a teacher, he availed himself of every advantage by means of domestic instruction to prepare his sons for their future exalted career. His industry was so far rewarded that the oldest son was sent to the high-school at Herborn, where he had already gained the confidence of his teachers, when death destroyed the father's well-conceived plans. The father died in 1742, without leaving any means, because the annual income was indeed not sufficient to meet even necessary expenses. The sufferings of the anxious mother and deeply-wounded widow were indescribable, yet they were not greater than her trust in God. She moved to Herborn because her sons could be educated much more cheaply there; and living was likewise less expensive. The following year already her oldest son received a charge from which he realized an amount equal to one half of his father's salary. The family fared much better now. Four years later he received a parish. The second son received a remunerative appointment by which he was able to assist in supporting the family and educating his younger brothers. Six years later he went to a foreign land, where he was living after a number of years, happy and honored. Then the third brother received a similar position, and through him the education of his remaining brothers was fully completed. This good man still lives contented in this place. He had the pleasure of having his mother, a woman who was very respectable and most noble, with him; and he manifested toward her, who saw all her children well cared for, a genuine filial affection up to her death. She died at an advanced age. The three youngest sons left our state. They all filled good parishes and were in good financial circumstances. One of the sons by means of his writings gained for himself quite a large reading public, and another occupied a seat and had a voice in the consistory of his country.

What a fine tribute we have in the above to the father, who by home instruction devoted himself to the advancement of his children! What a tribute to the mother, whose heart did not fail her when she was left alone and without temporal provision; who took her family, then consisting of six sons and a daughter, and moved to Herborn, there to give her sons the advantages of education! What a credit to the older sons,—Philip William being the second son referred to,—who united their endeavors with the courage and management of the mother in maintaining the family and securing the education of their younger brothers! And what a result,—six sons educated classically and theologically, and all of them afterward successful and honored ministers! May we not place the name of Wilhelmina Henrietta Otterbein with the names of Lois and Eunice, and along with those of the mothers of Augustine, Chrysostom, and John Wesley?

It may not be without some interest and occasional use to have here given a somewhat full and connected account of the family of John Daniel and Wilhelmina Henrietta Otterbein. The form will be abbreviated as much as possible:

1. Christina Henrietta, born October 19th, 1720. Died young.

2. John Henry, born March 21st, 1722. Studied at Herborn 1738. He was the only one of the family that went

away to school before the death of the father. Candidate and teacher at Herborn 1744. In connection with his teaching he served as vicar of Ockersdorf 1745. Pastor at Fleisbach 1749; second pastor at Herborn 1757; pastor at Burbach 1769. He published a number of sermons. Four of his sons became pastors. Died October 20th, 1800.

3. Christian Frederick, born January 7th, 1724. Died in his twelfth year.

4. and 5. Philip William and Anna Margaret, twins, born June 3d, 1726. Anna Margaret died in infancy.

6. John Charles, born May 14th, 1728. Candidate at Herborn 1751. Teacher at Herborn from 1752 to the close of his life. Also served for a time in the place of the second pastor. After 1780 co-rector, and after 1790, rector. Died May 4th, 1807.

7. George Godfrey, born January 14th, 1731. Pastor at Kecken 1756. Pastor at Duisburg 1762. He was "imbued with apostolic zeal, and was thoroughly convinced of the error of the spirit of his age." He stood associated with the leading minds of Germany. He felt the force of that course of events that ultimated in rationalism, but resisted with all his strength the on-rolling tide of ruin. He was the author of three volumes on the Hoidelberg Catechism, two of them belonging to one work, of a volume on practical Christianity, and the editor of a book on "Enoch," or walking with God. He also was the author of text-books for schools. He realized what Germany now more than anything else needs to realize, that the schools must be protected against the poison of infidelity and rationalism, and made the nursery of true and healthful moral training. His writings were of a superior character, and were to some extent introduced into this country. He died September 10th, 1800.

8. Philipene Margaret, born March 26th, 1733. Married to Pastor Schollen.

9. John Daniel, born 1736; before 1766 a candidate. Tutor

in Berleburg 1766. Second pastor at Berleburg 1771. First pastor 1795. Soon afterward inspector, and then counselor of the consistory. He published a volume on the Heidelberg Catechism. Died 1804.

10. Henry Daniel, born November 12th, 1738. Pastor at Kecken 1762. Pastor at Pfalzdorf 1768. Pastor at Mulheim on the Ruhr, 1771. Died November 27th, 1807.

Only John Henry of the sons had descendants. The widest diffusion of the Otterbein family was shortly before the close of the eighteenth century. There were a number of Otterbeins outside of the family of John Daniel Otterbein that occupied important places as pastors and teachers. At the present time there are no Otterbeins in Orange Nassau, where once the members of the family were so numerous and influential. Some families of Otterbeins from the original home of the Otterbein family near Fulda, have found their way to America. Representatives of these families reside in at least five different states. Some are Protestants, and others Catholics. At an early day some of the representatives of the Nassau Otterbeins also came to America, but where they or their descendants reside is not known.

Let us now return and take up the history of Philip William from the death of his father. At the time of his father's death he was sixteen years of age. We may be sure that the orphaned children read lessons of faith out of the trusting and

resolute countenance of their noble mother. We have already noticed the wise decision and courage of the mother in resolving upon going to Herborn. She could have stayed for a year in the parsonage at Frohnhausen, but she seems to have moved at once. Although she has been spoken of as having been left without property, the family, while at Dillenburg, had a small lot on which two cows could find pasture. Anything from the sale of this property, however, even if it was not consumed while at Frohnhausen, would have but meagerly contributed to the convenience of the family in situating itself at Herborn.

Herborn was about three miles south of Dillenburg, and contained about two thousand five hundred inhabitants. It was chiefly noted for being the seat of a celebrated Reformed school. The school was founded in 1584, before the morning dew of the Reformation had disappeared, and almost immediately after the characteristic elements of the Reformed Church had been, by a synod that met at Herborn, adopted for Nassau. Olevianus, one of the authors of the Heidelberg Catechism, became the first theological professor, but died after he had occupied his chair three years. The school consisted of two parts, — the *pædagogium*, or *gymnasium*, made up of five



classes, and the academy.\* In the academy the instruction was given by able professors, and mostly in the form of lectures.

Each class in the pædagogium had its own preceptor. In the pædagogium the students studied, for two years, philosophy, Greek and Roman literature, logic, mathematics, history, etc. Then they passed their examination, and in the academy took up medicine, jurisprudence, or theology, according to the course of life that they expected to pursue. The greater number, however, took up theology, in the study of which they were required to spend three years. The theological course was, in some respects, more complete than that now required in the theological seminaries of our country, and much more thorough than that now required of candidates for the ministry in Nassau. The students were required to preach twice a week before one of the theological professors, and every Sunday afternoon one of them had to lead in a Bible-lesson before the students.

The theological direction of the school is indicated by the fact that the students were required to study a book made up of selections in Latin

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\* Instead of "academy," the term "university" is used in Schem's German Cyclopædia. In the Cyclopædia of Education by Kiddle and Schem it is said, "The academy connected with the gymnasium, after Sturm's plan [which the school at Herborn resembled], approached but did not entirely reach the standard of a university."

from the writings of the great evangelical Netherlanders, Vitringa and Lampe. Upon the writings of these men the professors also gave lectures.

At Herborn, up to the middle of the eighteenth century, moderate Calvinism was taught. At this time the peculiarities of this system ceased to be accented. The Reformed Church in Germany has never been much given to elaborating or defending theological tenets,—especially such as have divided the minds of devout Christians. Its spirit has been that of Melancthon. Such was the Herborn school when, in 1742, Philip William became enrolled as a student.

What, may it be supposed, was the moral influence exerted upon him during the course of his studies? The influence could not be from impersonal elements, but from men,—from fellow-students and professors.

The influence coming from his fellow-students must have been of a mixed character. Though the large body of the students were preparing for the ministry, it must not be supposed that even all of these were free from moral indifference or dissoluteness. Even in the ministry were those whose lives were offensive. To be a minister a man must have some mental force and scholarly equipment, but godliness was not always taken

into account. In that period generally, just as in all state-churches at the present time, the office was considered largely apart from the moral character of the incumbent, and outward church-membership was often put for inward grace. Yet there are no circumstances in which the earnestness and conscious nobility of the young can be so successfully drawn out as in those furnished by the association of kindred minds in the pursuit of knowledge. Even reckoning the influence of students upon students, this will be found to be true. But if there is a peril, just as there always is where there is any offered good, this is in the largest measure obviated if in the instruction and government high moral and intellectual endowments fill their appropriate places.

In the Herborn school, at the time when Philip William Otterbein was in attendance, very noble men filled the professors' chairs. Drs. John Henry Schramm, Valentine Arnold, and John Eberhardt Rau, among the professors, were men of rare character and fitness for their responsible work. They were not only learned, but were able in their contact with the students, to touch the secret springs of character and strength, and bring the latent energies of the soul into high and pleasurable action. Dr. Rau was a celebrated orientalist, and the author of a number of volumes on oriental subjects.

Special mention must be made of Drs. Schramm and Arnold as having exerted upon Philip William most salutary influence. Dr. Schramm \* was an apostle of the so-called *Thaetige Christenthum* (active Christianity). As professor in Herborn he lectured on practical divinity, besides being occupied in part in exegesis.

Dr. Arnold † was a man of lovely and noble character, was a man of faith and zeal, and felt a special attachment for Philip William Otterbein, because of the debt that he felt that he owed to his father, John Daniel Otterbein, whose instructions he had enjoyed in the Latin school at Dillenburg. Thus again did pious and disinterested influence return to bless the source from which it came.

In spirit and belief Schramm and Arnold were alike. It was under their direction that the students studied the compendium formed from the writings of Vitringa and Lampe. Vitringa and Lampe were great Netherland theologians, who

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\* He was born March 20, 1676. He became chief preceptor at Herborn in 1701, went as pastor to Dillenburg in 1707, was made a theological professor at Herborn in 1709, held a professorship at Marburg 1721-1722, and then returned to Herborn, where as professor, and later as holding also the office of superintendent of the church for Nassau, he continued to exert a great influence for good until his death, in 1753.

† He was born in Dillenburg, January 26th, 1712. He attained renown in oriental and rabbinical literature. In 1745 he became first pastor and professor at Herborn. His lectures extended over a wide range of subjects.

confessed to the influence that they had received from Cocceius, another great theologian whose center of influence was the Netherlands rather than Germany, and who has been spoken of as "a man mighty in the Spirit, and far in advance of most men of his time in the apprehension of the work of God in Christ."

A strong influence also came from the east in the form of Pietism. Spener, the founder of Pietism, died in Berlin in 1705. In an important sense, however, both wings of the evangelical movement could be said to belong to Nassau and the adjoining countries; since Cocceius received his principal idea from a work published by Ole-vianus, the first theological professor at Herborn, and since Pietism originated with Spener while he was pastor in the neighboring city of Frankfort-on-the-Main. Pietism, as to its spirit and method, started with a struggle after purity of heart, sought through minor assemblies the nurture of those that had reached this state; and gave to internal elements generally an importance over the external. It sought to leaven the church, not to introduce rivalry or antagonism. It originated in the Lutheran Church, but especially along some portions of the Rhine obtained a great influence in the Reformed Church. It was only another of those spiritual freshets, occurring

in all the ages of the church, that, while sometimes mistaking their proper course, have yet made many a solitary place to rejoice. Dr. Schramm especially was favorably inclined to Pietism. Dr. Henry Horch, professor in Herborn from 1690 to 1698, had carried Pietism to such an extravagance as to bring it into disrepute. It is better to speak of Dr. Schramm as Pietistic than as a Pietist. Dr. Arnold, as to the source and character of his tendencies, was more a Hollander. He also had a general acquaintance abroad, and read and recommended the works of Philip Doddridge. It will be remembered that Dr. Doddridge was the author of, among other works, "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," and "Sermons on Regeneration." Both Dr. Schramm and Dr. Arnold took great interest in mission-work, and in all forms of active Christianity.

It can not be a matter of doubt as to what was the influence of these two superior men upon young Otterbein. Neither can it be doubted what was one of the sources of those rich tides of evangelical life, that, after he came to America, filled his heart to overflowing, and furnished a new starting-point for spiritual religion among the Germans that had sought homes in the New World.

## CHAPTER II.

BECOMES A MINISTER, THEN A MISSIONARY.

Serves as House-Teacher — Preceptor — Ordination — Duties as Vicar — Oppositions — Call for Missionaries — Recommendation — The Separation — The Voyage.

**A**FTER Philip William Otterbein had completed his course of study at Herborn, he set his face toward the holy ministry. What his exercises of mind were we do not know. He surely did not act hastily or thoughtlessly. Advancement in the ministry was slow, and the emoluments, in most cases, meager; worldly considerations, therefore, could not have governed his mind. The venerated example of his father, the pious desires of his mother, the influence of great and holy men, along with the silent promptings of the Holy Spirit, would perhaps explain the course that he took.

He first went as a house-teacher (*hauslehrer*) into the country of Berg, a small dukedom lying north-west of Nassau about one hundred miles. In the Reformed Church in Germany it was a quite general custom for those that had completed

their course in school and were looking toward the ministry to teach for a time in the families of those that might be willing to engage their services. Thus they would improve their qualifications for the part in teaching that would, in connection with their future ministry, fall to them. Some offered themselves for examination immediately on their leaving school, and were at once constituted candidates. Young Otterbein's modesty, however, kept him from becoming a candidate officially until there was some suitable occasion for it. To be accredited as a candidate meant about what being "licensed" means with us. In Germany, though, the educational qualifications were more strictly looked to. Ordination was not conferred until the candidate received a call to a work that required full ministerial functions. The candidates were understood to be waiting such a call. Hence the name candidate. It is altogether probable that in Berg the young teacher taught in the family of one of the wealthy merchants in the beautiful city of Elberfeld. Rev. Nicholas Druschel and Rev. John Achenbach, ministers that left a record of piety, were at this time preaching in Elberfeld.

In 1748, Philip William became preceptor in the Herborn school. This made it proper for him to pass his examination, and to take the rank and



title of a candidate of the holy ministry. He accordingly passed his examination, and became in the proper sense a candidate. He was examined May 6th, 1748, the Herborn faculty being the examiners. He became preceptor of the third class, his oldest brother serving at the same time as preceptor of the fifth class, having been appointed to the same four years before. Those that had been his teachers were now his associates. He was but twenty-two years of age, and yet his work was with those that were somewhat advanced in their studies.

In 1749 his oldest brother, who, in connection with his teaching, had also served as vicar of Ockersdorf, left Herborn to become pastor at Fleisbach, and now Philip William was appointed by the count's upper consistory at Dillenburg, vicar to the vacant post. It was now necessary that he be ordained that he might minister at the altar, as well as speak from the pulpit. His ordination took place in the city church at Dillenburg, June 13th, 1749. The following is a copy of a certificate of ordination, given by Dr. Schramm, when Mr. Otterbein became a missionary to America:

LECTORIS SALUTEM.

Reverendus et doctissimus vir juvenis, Philippus Guilhel-mus Otterbeinius, gente Nassanius, domo Dillenburgensis, S. Ministerii Candidatus, classis tertie hujus pædagogii præ-

ceptor, manuum impositione adsistentibus Cl. Arnoldo, professore atque primario cœtus Herbornensis pastore, et admodum reverendo Klingelhœfero ejusdem ecclesiæ secundario, ut vicariam in cœtu Ockersdorpiano præstaret opem, 13 Junii, 1749, ordinationis a me impetravit axioma. Quod his ad ejus requisitionem testor, et dilecto meo quondam auditori in peregrinas abiturienti oras, fausta quævis prosperumque iter ex animo precor, constantis mei adversus eum adfectus monumentum.

JOH. HENRICUS SCHRAMMIUS,  
 { Signum } Theologia Doctor et Ecclesiarum Nassauicarum Superintendens.  
 HERBORNÆ, III Calendas Martias, 1752. \*

## TRANSLATION.

*To the Reader, Greeting:—*

The reverend and very learned young man, Philip William Otterbein, from Dillenburg, in Nassau, a candidate of the holy ministry, and a teacher of the third class in this school, received of me, assisted by Cl. † Arnold, professor and first pastor of the congregation at Herborn, and by the Reverend Klingelhœfer, second pastor of the same church, on the 13th of June, 1749,—the rite of ordination by the laying on of hands, that he might perform the functions of vicar, in the congregation at Ockersdorf. This I certify at his request; and to my much esteemed former hearer, who is now about to emigrate to foreign shores, I earnestly wish all good fortune and a prosperous voyage, and subscribe this letter as a testimonial of my never-failing affection towards him.

JOHN HENRY SCHRAMM,  
 { Seal. } Doctor of Theology, and Superintendent of the Church of Nassau.  
 HERBORN, February 28, 1752.

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\* The original copy of this letter was handed to Rev. John Hildt, by Mr. Otterbein, near the close of his life, and by Mr. Hildt placed in the *Telescope* office, where it is still preserved.

† "Cl." here stands as an abbreviation for Clarissimus, a title often prefixed to the names of German professors. The term means "most illustrious." The title might be rendered, "His Highness."

In Herborn there was but one church, but there were two pastors, Dr. Arnold being first pastor, and Rev. John Henry Klingelhöfer second pastor. Ockersdorf was a village with a population of two hundred, and situated about twenty minutes' walk north of Herborn. About ten minutes' walk to the right of Ockersdorf was Burg, a village of two hundred and fifty inhabitants. The churches in these villages were connected with the Herborn church, and were under the special direction of the second pastor. Mr. Otterbein was to preach at Ockersdorf once each Sabbath, on the first Wednesday of each month, and on festival days, and was to hold a weekly prayer-meeting. A stated prayer-meeting at that time was almost without example. He often preached also at Burg; likewise it was a part of his duty frequently to preach at Herborn. His preaching at Herborn seems to have been connected with the service that he owed the second pastor, as well as with his position as preceptor.

During this time he also taught his sister and younger brothers at home. After the departure of his oldest brother he became the head of the family. The amounts that he received as preceptor and vicar enabled him, in considerable part, to provide for his mother and the younger members of the family, and to assist his younger broth-

ers in their education. We may be sure that the oldest brother did not cease to contribute his part toward the family maintenance. What a beautiful picture we have here of family interest and devotedness!

But Mr. Otterbein's sailing was not all smooth. It was at this time and in these circumstances that the occurrences given by Rev. H. G. Spayth took place: "The zeal, the devotion, and the earnestness with which he met his new duties surprised his friends and astonished his hearers. In reproof he spared neither rank nor class. \* \* \* Opposition and clamor, however, had the tendency to add force to his arguments in directing his hearers from a cold formality to the life and power of our holy religion. To witness the good impressions made on some was encouraging. But with this came also fiery trials and heavy exercises of mind." When the authorities were "privately solicited to arrest his preaching for a season," his mother said to him: "Ah, William, I expected this, and give you joy. This place is too narrow for you, my son; they will not receive you here; you will find your work elsewhere." She was often heard to say, "My William will have to be a missionary; he is so frank, so open, so natural, so prophet-like." \*

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\* See Spayth's History of the United Brethren in Christ, pp. 19 and 20. While this account bears evidence of general correctness in its facts, it yet fails to recognize the extremes that existed in the church,—the genuine and enlightened Christianity on the one side, and the laxness and irreligion that were comprehended on the other.

The opposition may have been at Ockersdorf, or at Burg, or at Herborn; or it may have been at all of these places, at any one or all of which his mother could have been a regular hearer. The condition of religion in Nassau at that time was low. Among the students at Herborn there was not always the most becoming deportment. Amidst all of the encouragements to study, some were idle and troublesome. The second pastor was extremely sensitive, and disposed to bring charges against his co-workers. Mr. Otterbein, on his part, was doubtless as well qualified, at this time, to give the law to loose-livers and careless church-members, as ever afterward. If he met with oppositions, so did Edwards and Wesley, and from similar causes. But the only authority that could put a restraint upon the young preacher was that that had appointed him. It is not likely that his ministrations were even temporarily interrupted. It is certain that he continued in his double capacity as vicar and preceptor until he became a missionary.

We now approach the period of Mr. Otterbein's embarkation as a missionary. In 1746, Rev. Michael Schlatter of St. Gall, Switzerland, had gone under the auspices of the synods of North and South Holland as a missionary to the German Reformed emigrants in Pennsylvania. Owing to

the general poverty and distress in Germany, especially in those districts where the Reformed faith was predominant, the Germans were not able to help their brethren in the far-off provinces of the New World. At this time,—let it always be spoken to their praise,—the Hollanders undertook to assist the spiritually destitute and financially helpless Germans in America. After five years of labor in America, Mr. Schlatter went to Europe and presented himself before the classis of Amsterdam, to which had been committed the supervision both of the Dutch and German work in America, and asked for further assistance in money and in missionaries. He received a favorable hearing and was sent on to Germany and Switzerland to enlist further sympathy and much needed co-operation. He was especially to secure six young men as missionaries, the expense of sending whom was pledged by the general church of Holland. Mr. Schlatter applied at Herborn for these recruits, and met with hearty assistance from Drs. Schramm and Arnold.

Under date of February 25th, 1752, Dr. Schramm wrote in the record of the Herborn academy, as follows: “Rev. Schlatter handed me the list of candidates whom he desires to take along with him to Pennsylvania, and prays that we give them a general academical testimonial. Shall they have such?”

The second professor of theology, Dr. John E. Rau, wrote under the question: "Yes. I hope there is no one that would not rather see the ministers desiring this recommendation advanced to work in a foreign land than in their home country."

Though the young ministers were spoken of in a general way as candidates, the preceptor, Philip William Otterbein, was one of the volunteers.

The reader will not be displeased to find given here in full the testimonial given to Mr. Otterbein, as drawn up in behalf of the faculty at Herborn, by Dr. Valentine Arnold. The following is the testimonial:

L. S. :—

Inhaber dieses, der Wohl-Ehrwuerdige und Hochgelehrte Herr, Hl. Philippe Wilhelm Otterbein, ordinirter Candidatus S. Ministerii, bisheriger Praeceptor am hiesigen Pädagogo und nun berufener Prediger in Pensylvanien, ist am 4ten Juni, morgens zwischen 2 und 3 Uhr im Jahre 1726 zu Dillenburg, von ehrlichen, und der Evangelisch Reformirten Kirche zugethanen Eltern gebohren, und am 6ten dito zur Hl. Taufe gebracht worden. Sein Hl. Vater ist gewesen der weyl. Hochwohl Ehrwuerdige und Hochgelehrte Herr, Hl. Johann Daniel Otterbein, ehemdem wohlnerirter Rector der Lateinischen Schule daselbst, nachgehends aber treuffeissiger Prediger bei deren Gemeinde Frohnhausen und Wissenbach, welcher am 16ten Nov., 1742, das Zeitliche mit dem Ewigen verwechselt. Die Frau Mutter ist die Hoch-Edle und tugendreiche Frau, Frau Wilhelmine Henriette, so als Wittwe noch Dato am Leben ist. Sie war eine geborne ———. Taufzeuge war Hl. Philippe Wilhelm Keller, Hochfuerstl. Nassau-

Dillenburgischer Kuechenmeister, als naher Anverwandter. Sr. Wohl - Ehrwuerden ist in der Reformirten Christl. Religion wohl erzogen, und hierauf zum Mitglied dieser Kirche angenommen worden, hat auch jeder Zeit einen ehrbaren, frommen und christlichen Wandel gefuehret, und nicht nur mit vielfaeltigem Predigen und treuer Verkuendigung des goetl. Wortes, sowohl in dieser Stadt, als auf einem nahegelegenen hierher gehoerigen Dorfe (wo er als Vicarius den hl. Dienst eine geraume Zeitlang versehen) und an andern Orten mehr geschehen, sondern auch mit seinem gottseligen Leben die Gemeinden erbaut. Weshalben wir nicht zweifeln, er werde auch der fuer Ihn bestimmten Gemeinde in Pennsylvanien treulich und fruchtbarlich vorstehen. Wie wir Ihn denn zu dem Ende des Allmaechtigen Schutz und Geleite inbruenstig anempfehlen und Ihm zu dem wichtigen Werk, wozu Er berufen worden, und sich so bereitfertig finden lassen, viele Gnade von Oben, und die reichsten goetl. Segen von Grund der Seelen anwenschen. So geschahen, Herborn, im Fuerstenthum Nassau-Lillenburg, den 26ten Februar, 1752.

V. ARNOLD,

Professor und erster Prediger daselbst.

#### TRANSLATION.

*To the Reader, Greeting:—*

The bearer of this, the truly reverend and very learned Mr. Philip William Otterbein, an ordained candidate of the holy ministry, hitherto preceptor in this pædagogium, and now called as a preacher to Pennsylvania, was born June 4th,\* 1726, in the morning between two and three o'clock, at Dillenburg, of honorable parents belonging to the Evangelical Reformed Church, and was baptized June 6th. His father was the right reverend and very learned Mr. John Daniel Otterbein, formerly the highly esteemed rector of the Latin school at Dillenburg, but afterwards a faithful, zealous preacher to the congregations at Frohnhausen and Wissenbach, and who departed

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\* This is the date to which attention has already been called.



from time into eternity, November 16th, \* 1742. His mother is the right noble and very virtuous woman, Wilhelmina Henrietta, her maiden name being ————.† She is alive at this time as a widow. His godfather was Mr. Philip William Keller, steward to the court of Nassau-Dillenburg, who was a near relative. The truly reverend Philip William Otterbein was well raised in the Reformed Christian religion, and then received as a member of this church. He has always lived an honest, pious, and Christian life; and not only by much preaching and faithful declaring of the word of God in this city, as also at a near affiliating town where he has been vicar for a considerable time, and at other places, but also by his godly life, has he built up the church. Wherefore we do not doubt that he will faithfully and fruitfully serve the church in Pennsylvania, to which he has been called. Therefore, to this end, we commend him to the protection of the Almighty, whose care and leading we pray upon him; and we pray that he may give him much grace from above, and the richest divine blessing in the work to which he has been called, and to which he was so willing to go, and we wish him from the bottom of our souls success.

So done at Herborn, in the principality of Nassau-Dillenburg. February 26th, 1752.

V. ARNOLD, Professor and First Pastor.

The time for the trial of the mother's faith had come. She had thought of a mission-field for her son, but when her thought seemed to be taking the form of a fact, her motherly heart began to sink. "She hastened to her closet, and after being relieved by tears and prayer she returned strengthened, and taking her William by the

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\* Mr. Cuno gives November 14th as the date.

† This blank has been referred to.

hand and pressing that hand to her bosom she said, 'Go; the Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord cause his face to shine upon thee and with much grace direct thy steps. On earth I may not see thy face again—but go.'"\* What tenderness, and yet what composure and strength! Much more was evinced than mere submission.

Immediately on the resignation of Philip William Otterbein as preceptor, his brother John Charles obtained a place as preceptor in the Herborn school. From this time forward the mother had her home with him.

Mr. Schlatter with his band of young ministers went first to Holland, where they were to receive their outfit and take passage. One of the six, however, like John Mark, declined to go to the "work." Yielding to the entreaties of his mother, he shrunk from the mission-field. His place was at once taken by a young man from Berg, who with his wife joined the company in Holland. The fellow-missionaries of Mr. Otterbein were William Stoy, John Waldschmidt, Theodore Frankenfeld, John Casper Rubel, and Wissler, the candidate from Berg. At the Hague the young men passed their examination, approved themselves by preaching trial sermons, and were solemnly consecrated to mission-work,

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\* Spayth's History, p. 21.

those that had not been ordained receiving also ordination.

The missionaries were to be "orthodox, learned, pious, and of humble disposition; diligent, sound in body, and eagerly desirous after, not earthly but heavenly treasures, especially the salvation of immortal souls." Besides perquisites, and the amounts, generally ranging between eighty and one hundred and fifty dollars, that the fields in America might supply, they were to receive from Holland a stipend of "forty or fifty Belgic florins,"—from sixteen to twenty dollars. The perquisites would perhaps be small fees for marriages and funerals, and house and fuel free. The method of apportioning the money received from Holland was soon changed, and, as a result, some of the missionaries received from that source alone, but for a short time however, nearly one hundred dollars. The church in Holland had also incidental expenses to meet, amounting to thousands of dollars. But from Switzerland, the Palatinate, and even England, generous contributions came.

It is not easy to estimate the enthusiasm and steady devotion of the Hollanders in this disinterested work. They were already assisting more than one hundred needy churches in Europe, besides supporting a number of missionaries in the

East Indies and elsewhere. At the same time, however, they expected the churches that they assisted to imitate the strict Calvinism of Holland itself. When the first help was rendered by Holland, about 1730, the Germans were required to adhere to the "Heidelberg Catechism (the Palatinate Confession of Faith), the Canons of the Synod of Dort, and the rules of church government of Dort." The band of ministers now referred to were required to solemnly bind themselves to submit to the "Formula of Unity of the Netherlands." The "Formula of Unity" is a number of times referred to in the Amsterdam correspondence, but whether the standards as a body or an understood abstract of them is meant it is difficult to determine. In their own country the Germans insisted on nothing as a doctrinal standard beyond the Heidelberg Catechism.

Toward the last of March the missionaries sailed from Holland, and the night preceding the 28th of July they landed in New York, the voyage having occupied nearly four months. The year preceding, Mr. Schlatter had made the voyage from America to England in five weeks. Sometimes, however, in going over this same line of passage six months were consumed.

Mr. Schlatter and his band of missionaries were met on the day succeeding their arrival by Rev.

John Melchior Mühlenberg, the eminent pioneer missionary of the Lutheran Church, who, when the young ministers were introduced to him, quoted to them the appropriate but heart-trying language of Christ, “Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.”

## CHAPTER III.

### MINISTRY AT LANCASTER.

The Germans in America — Condition of Religion — Lancaster — Success of his Ministry — Crisis in his Experience — Significance of the same — Case of Dr. Hendel, jr. — Assurance — The Extremes of Formality and Capriciousness — Two Worthy Types Combined — The End of Written Sermons — Calvinism Forsaken.



WHEN Mr. Otterbein came to America, the full group of the original thirteen colonies had had a common existence of scarcely a score of years. Thus we have to do with provinces, not states. Nearly a quarter of a century was yet to elapse before the era of independence. Though the colonies presented a wide, promising view, and large accessions were yearly made to the population, it is yet not so much with the broad areas of the country and the body of the population with which we are concerned. It is rather New Germany — Germany transferred, struggling to strike its roots into the soil and to lift and extend its branches, crowded upon and often trampled, yet Germany still — that we seek to find within the borders of the western world.

The Dutch, or Hollanders, formed trading *stations* in the state of New York, in 1614, and after 1621 established regular settlements in different parts of the state. They brought with them the religion of their country, and the result of their early migration to the New World was the establishment of the Dutch Reformed Church as one of the earliest Protestant churches of America.

The Germans were nearly a century later in coming in any considerable numbers to our shores. Only about two hundred families arrived between 1682 and 1702, the first period of German immigration. Between 1702 and 1727, forty or fifty thousand came. They came mainly from the districts along the Rhine, beginning with Holland and including on the south Switzerland, and were generally called Palatines, a very large proportion of them coming from the Palatinate, an important country of the middle Rhine. As with the English settlers in America, the cause that led them to leave their homes was religious persecution and political oppression. The cruel and ambitious schemes of the powerful Louis XIV. of France, and the calamities of the western provinces of Germany during the reign of that unprincipled monarch, were, in many cases, the direct cause. Louis was the persecutor of the

Huguenots of France and the enemy of the Protestants of the Netherlands. In 1674 he ordered the devastation of the Palatinate. The greatest of calamities seemed to fall upon the common Protestantism of Europe in 1685. In that year James II.—Stuart and Catholic—became king of England, Louis XIV. revoked the edict of Nantes, and a Catholic became elector of the Palatinate, a country almost wholly Protestant. In the circumstances of the change in the Palatinate, too, Louis contrived a pretext for claiming the country for France. By his orders the Palatinate was devastated a second time in 1688, and again in 1693. Is it any wonder that from the wretched provinces of the Rhine there were many that sought in a strange land the rights and blessings that were denied them at home?

The Mennonites in Switzerland were persecuted by the Reformed and Catholics alike; and many of them, after a temporary residence in Germany, sought an asylum in America. By the bounty of England, some of the distressed Palatines were sent to Ireland and others to America. The great avenue for the oppressed Germans and Swiss was through Holland, which for over a century had afforded a generous refuge for those that were persecuted for conscience' sake. The German refugees almost all sailed from some port in Hol-



land. To supply every feature in the picture of the general oppression, it needs only to be said that even the tolerant and generous Hollanders could not permit the Lutherans that had sought homes in Holland, but who differed from them on the tenet of Calvinism, to live peaceably among them. From the general oppression and discontent it is easy to see that large numbers would flock to the New World.

The German settlements extended from the Carolinas to New York. Scattered settlements existed also far beyond these limits. The great majority of Germans, however, sought homes in Pennsylvania. Here they constituted about one third\* of the population, occupying almost exclusively some parts of the country. From Pennsylvania many crossed over into Maryland and Virginia, though considerable numbers went directly to these provinces.

In 1751 it was estimated that in Pennsylvania there was a German population of ninety thousand, thirty thousand of the number being traditionally attached to the Reformed Church. The Germans were without a knowledge of the language of the provinces, and to a large extent

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\* George Thomas, the governor of Pennsylvania from 1738 to 1746, estimated the proportion of Germans during his administration, at three fifths of the population, the entire population being two hundred thousand. The estimate seems to be much too high.

without pastors and schools. To some extent efforts were made toward the supplying of these wants. Their English neighbors did something, though their part was mostly one of indifference or cupidity. The time of many of the Germans was sold for a term of years to pay their passage-money. The most of them had been at home of the peasant class.

Though in their new situation they were generally industrious and thrifty, the condition of religion among them became the most deplorable. Common observation indicates that social influences of a local and traditional character are all but necessary in preserving men in their proper religious character. The crossing of the Atlantic, or of the Mississippi, or a move from the country to the city, or from the city to the country, is the frequent explanation of religious apostasy. The German immigrants brought little in the form of religious helps with them, and they found the least in their new settlements that would guard and nourish spiritual life. In their homes in Europe religion was too often an outward form; and now in their wilderness homes, in their unwillingness to part with all religion, it was to too great an extent a mere dead form that they made more or less effort to establish. Their minds were hardened by the treatment that they

met, their energies were taxed in their struggle *to build homes and secure subsistence*, and the very atmosphere of the New World encouraged a wild and reckless life.

With all this there still remained something in what has been claimed as the susceptibility of the German heart for the real principles and requirements of the Christian religion. In all of the past history of the German peoples, they, more than all others have been noted for first asking the question, "What is true?" and then conceding the binding force of the answer that is returned. Too commonly men first question the wisdom and rectitude of the claims that are made upon them, and perhaps never get beyond taking counsel of their own desires. If men will follow the rational method and first ask, what is true, they will surely find the other questions, always more difficult, on which many unprofitably wear out their strength, fully solved, and the ways of God fully approved.

Let us now turn our attention to Mr. Otterbein and his more immediate situation. After a brief rest in New York, Mr. Schlatter and his company proceeded to Philadelphia. Mr. Otterbein soon received a call from the Reformed congregation at Lancaster, which he accepted. Twenty-three years before this time, Lancaster County, to which

reference will frequently be made, was cut off from Chester County. The town of Lancaster was laid out one year before the organization of the county, and soon became the principal town west of Philadelphia. In 1751 it contained five hundred houses and two thousand inhabitants. Soon after, it was spoken of as "a very respectable and wealthy place." But it was not until 1792 that the turnpike was located between Philadelphia and Lancaster,—the first located in this country,—and not until several years later that it was completed. There was not even a passenger stage-route between these places before 1784. Thus we see how new and unsubdued the country was. Lancaster County was largely settled by Germans from the Palatinate and Nassau, whose character would therefore be well known to Mr. Otterbein.

The Lancaster congregation was next in importance to the Reformed congregation in Philadelphia. But notwithstanding this fact, there had been frequent vacancies in the pastorate, the congregation being without a pastor fully one half of the time. Some that sustained the relation of pastor were unworthy men. Some of the best members had withdrawn, and those that remained were in a sadly demoralized state. For a year and a half the congregation had been with-

out a pastor, when the call was extended to Mr. Otterbein. He entered upon his work in August, 1752, under an engagement to serve the congregation five years. He also was to preach regularly, perhaps once per month, at New Providence, ten miles south-east of Lancaster.

Notwithstanding the various difficulties in his way, he labored during these years with "regular success." During his second year the little log church that had stood since 1736, was replaced by a substantial and attractive stone church, which continued to serve the congregation for a century, lacking one year, and which was then "too good to be torn down." We may as well prepare ourselves to witness the material interests that were promoted under Mr. Otterbein's hand every place where his labors were bestowed. He was acquainted with the wisdom by which the conditions of large and permanent success are supplied.

But he failed not to watch also over the spiritual condition of his flock. Mr. Harbaugh uses the following language in regard to his general vigilance and success: "Internally, the congregation greatly prospered. Evidences of his order and zeal look out upon us from the records in many ways; and enterprises started in his time have extended their results in the permanent features of the congregation down to this day."

Having served his term of five years, he was anxious to withdraw from the congregation. The cause of dissatisfaction was the irregularities and laxness that had grown up, at least in part, through the frequent vacancies in the pastorate, and that had been encouraged by the influences of the times. The method of the old churches, by not drawing the lines against those that gave no evidence of godly life, left pastors to be embarrassed by the wanton and wicked lives of many that held a place in the church. In this condition of things, Mr. Otterbein's desire for a spiritual church made his relations exceedingly irksome. "He complained of many grievances which had rendered his ministry unhappy, and demanded, as the condition of his continuance, the exercise of a just ecclesiastical discipline, the abolition of all inordinacy, and entire liberty of conscience in the performance of his pastoral duties. All this was readily promised by the congregation." On these conditions he consented to remain, but for no specified time.

Among the papers belonging to the archives of the church at Lancaster there is still preserved a manuscript drawn up in the hand-writing of Mr. Otterbein and signed by eighty male members of the congregation, through which it was sought to introduce the improved order and discipline that

had been promised. The following is the paper, *which shows at the same time the character of Mr. Otterbein as a pastor, and the better side of the congregation:*

“Inasmuch as for some time matters in our congregation have proceeded somewhat irregularly, and since we, in these circumstances, do not correctly know who they are that acknowledge themselves to be members of our church, especially among those who reside out of town, we, the minister and officers of this church, have taken this matter into consideration, and find it necessary to request that every one who calls himself a member of our church and who is concerned to lead a Christian life, should come forward and subscribe his name to the following rules of order:

“First of all, it is proper that those who profess themselves members should subject themselves to a becoming Christian church-discipline, according to the order of Christ and his apostles, and thus to show respectful obedience to ministers and officers in all things that are proper.

“Secondly: To the end that all disorder may be prevented, and that each member may be more fully known, each one, without exception, who desires to receive the Lord’s-supper, shall, previously to the preparation service, upon a day appointed for that purpose, personally appear before the minister, that an interview may be held.

“No one will, by this arrangement, be deprived of his liberty, or be in any way bound oppressively. This we deem necessary to the preservation of order; and it is our desire that God may bless it to this end. Whosoever is truly concerned to grow in grace will not hesitate to subscribe his name.”

Mr. Otterbein's second term of service continued but one year. In 1758 he resigned, with the intention of visiting his native land.

Besides the local work at Lancaster, Mr. Otterbein extended his labors to other places. In 1755 he was placed upon “two committees of supply,” which made it necessary for him to preach occasionally at Reading, and at Conewago, now in Adams County. By a similar arrangement made the following year, he was to supply the charge at York, but owing to the peculiar circumstances at York, he was certainly kept from following out the plan. In 1757 he was elected president of the cœtus. To the parochial schools he sustained the usual relation, and also, along with others, sustained a relation to an important educational enterprise, looking toward the improvement of the Germans generally.

The last place in this chapter has been reserved for the account of a great crisis—one might say an epoch—in the religious history of Mr. Otter-



bein. The time for this event in his experience was in the early part of his ministry in Lancaster, perhaps in the year 1754. This is the date given in some papers left by Mr. Spayth.

After Mr. Otterbein had preached an earnest sermon on repentance and faith, a man smitten with conviction came to him for advice. The sermon may have been uttered out of the cryings of his own heart, and may have expressed, as has been the case in so many instances, his own deep-felt wants. At all events, he knew not what answer to give to the awakened man. His only reply was, "My friend, advice is scarce with me to-day." He then sought his closet, and ceased not his struggle until he obtained the peace and joy of a conscious salvation, and withal that enlightenment in spiritual things that made him, in the years that followed, the skillful guide to so many of his fellow-beings into the way of life. Mr. Otterbein himself is the authority for the greatness of the change that took place, as is indicated by his answer to a question proposed to him by Bishop Asbury. Mr. Asbury's question was, "By what means were you brought to the gospel of God and our Savior?" The answer was, "By degrees was I brought to the knowledge of the truth, while I was at Lancaster." The answer, of course, refers more to the appre-

hension of the truth than to a result in the heart. Its representation of the greatness of the change is, therefore, all the stronger.

If we would understand the subsequent course of Mr. Otterbein, and the differences that came to exist between him and many of his brethren in the church to which he belonged, we must not hasten too rapidly over the great facts in his own spiritual history. We have already noticed the impulse to practical Christianity that he received from the great divines of the Netherlands through his teachers, Drs. Schramm and Arnold. Likewise, the influence received from Pictism has been referred to. The influences exerted upon him and his brothers, and the results brought about, as indicated in the preserved writings of three of these brothers, as well as by other evidences, were decidedly of a practical and experimental type. The early earnestness of Mr. Otterbein in the pulpit, and his hearty devotion of himself to the mission-field, have likewise come before us. His great labor and success, even in his early work in Lancaster, have also been noticed. What more, then, could he need, and what more could be required of him? The answer that he gave to Mr. Asbury's question indicates a continued struggle after light and liberty. We have noticed also the issue of that struggle.

But what was the character of the change referred to? The easiest answer would be to call it conversion, and that answer might be, for many purposes, sufficiently correct. Popularly and practically the term conversion, in this connection, has its advantages. But nothing in Mr. Otterbein's language or in the facts that have come down to us would shut us up to this as the only view of the case. We can neither deny nor affirm regeneration of his earlier state. He himself had no ground on which to base an affirmation, and this uncertainty is itself the greatest condemnation of such a state. The doctrine of a living faith he had heard from believing lips in Herborn. It would be difficult indeed to conclude that his heart, in this early period, was altogether unacquainted with saving grace.

The secret seems to lie in this, that with his catechetical education, his life as student and teacher, and his early work as a minister, he held Christianity predominantly in its outward character. In our day many preachers preach the law for years before they become acquainted with evangelical liberty, to say nothing of the thousands in the laity that strive to serve the Lord long years before they come to know the gracious heritage of Christians. Many there are that date the beginning of their spiritual life to an earlier

or later period, according to the particular view of their case that they at the time are taking. John Daniel Otterbein, the father of Philip William, was by no means so much inclined to a subjective type of piety as were some of those that exerted an influence upon his sons. The traditions of the Reformed Church were, for the most part, in favor of "educational religion." We can, therefore, see how two different tendencies would struggle together in the heart and life of Mr. Otterbein. Those familiar with the biographies of those that have grown up under the influence of the old churches of Europe, and that have afterward become eminent for their evangelical life, know in how many cases the contest against the powers of darkness and traditional ideas was long and painfully waged. Whatever may be our ideas as to Mr. Otterbein's spiritual state, it certainly should always be remembered by us, that his own calm judgment near the close of his life went back tenderly and gratefully to the period of his ministry at Lancaster as including the dawn of this conscious spiritual life.

If there was an earlier experience, it was yet clearly this later experience that furnishes the key to his after-life. It was this present conscious experience that he ever afterward preached as the privilege of all Christians. He believed none

the less in the outward things of Christianity and the Christian church as being important, but he believed with his whole soul that outward elements are worthless to those that do not inwardly appropriate. He believed that the inner life should be specifically regarded, and that while securities and nourishing causes are drawn from without the heart, every consideration of the soul's welfare requires that every individual know whether the proper and necessary results are secured in his own heart.

The case of Dr. Wm. Hendel, jr., the son of Dr. Hendel, the close friend of Mr. Otterbein, seems to have been similar to that of Mr. Otterbein. His outward life during the period of his ministry was circumspect, and his ministerial labors were not without at least a considerable measure of usefulness. The following is the account of the case of Dr. Hendel as given by the writer of an obituary sketch in the German Reformed *Messenger* of July 29th, 1846: "Agreeably to his particular request, it becomes my painful duty also to advert to the shady side of his personal history. In 1842 he caused Bro. Bucher of Reading to be sent for, and made to him, as he lay upon his couch, an extraordinary confession: 'Is it possible,' said he, 'that there is mercy for so great a sinner as I am. I am even a greater

sinner than was Saul of Tarsus. I have indeed had the theory of the Christian religion, but have never personally experienced the saving power of the gospel which I for so many years preached to others. In my youth I had good intentions and lived near to the Savior; but alas! I went back from him.' \* \* \* Mr. B. conversed with him for about three hours, when at length he obtained a comfortable sense of the pardon of his sins, and joyfully acknowledged, 'I have now for the first time become savingly acquainted with my Savior; now I live in him.'" He requested Mr. B. to make known his confession as a warning to his ministerial brethren, and after his death to make known the same to his former congregations. His request was complied with. The fact that Dr. Hendel made his statements four years before his death, and that he did not subsequently modify or recall them, evidently entitles them to be taken as calm and well considered.

Bishop Butler's case is often referred to. After his great services to Christianity, he was in great unrest of mind as to his own salvation. Nor does his doubt seem to have been the result of a momentary eclipse of faith. In some cases men of high natural powers seem to be left to struggle in the dark, almost as if there were no heaven, that

they may become fit instruments in working out the human side and human conditions of Christianity. Such may have been the case with Bishop Butler.

The new fact, which now became a doctrine with Mr. Otterbein, was that of assurance. The doctrine is certainly contained in the Scriptures. It belonged to the faith of the early church. It was the doctrine of the Reformers. Sir William Hamilton gives the following testimony: "Assurance, personal assurance (the feeling of certainty that God is propitious to *me* — that *my* sins are forgiven, *fiducia*, *plerophoria fidei*) was long universally held in the Protestant communities to be the criterion and condition of true or *saving faith*. Luther declares that he who hath not assurance spews faith out, and Melancthon makes assurance the discriminating line of Christianity from heathenism." \* While historically it may not be quite correct to state that the churches of the Reformation held assurance to be of the "essence of faith," as Hamilton further along asserts, it is yet quite correct to say that in the time of the Reformation assurance was always implied and urged. The last utterance of the lofty-minded Olevianus, given in answer to the question whether he was certain of his salvation, was a glorious CERTISSIMUS, *most cer-*

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\* Discussions on Philosophy, etc., p. 486.

*tain.* It is also true that in our times, by all trustworthy religious teachers, assurance is held as in the strictest sense "practical and obligatory." It is certain that Mr. Wesley, Mr. Otterbein, and others of pronounced Christian experience, did not regard their own conversion as complete until they reached the point of assurance. While, therefore, a prior work of grace may exist, our estimates and endeavors are to be governed by a rule that includes all of the elements of a full Christian experience.

But more than once the important practical doctrine of assurance has fallen into obscurity. In the closing half of the seventeenth century it began to break forth again in Holland and Germany. The Pietists spoke of a "scaling" in their experience.

In England, the beginning of the eighteenth century found the doctrine generally unknown, and the possibility of the experience, except in rare cases, generally denied. Yet since 1667 there had been in England the noted "religious societies," which soon came to be numerous. These societies were, after a slight declension, revived by the Moravians. They possessed a large measure of spiritual light. Wesley became a member of one of these societies, and after his own heart reached the goal of assurance he found in these



societies, in the different parts of the British Islands, the facilities of at once rapidly and successfully extending his work. From the "religious societies" and from the Moravians he drew much. Luther's preface to his commentary on Galatians, however, was the immediate means of bringing Wesley into a present personal consciousness of salvation.

If our later times have gained anything beyond what was possessed by former times,—and why should they not make some advance?—the gain is in the direction of making explicit what was implicit, of making definite and practical by a testing and working rule what was more or less involved and confusing. Though the doctrine of regeneration, or conversion, had not been lost, it came, in the multitude of cases, to be a nullity, or was sadly caricatured, from the want of light and test in applying it.

Thus on the continent of Europe, in the British Isles, and in the wilds of America, in the latter part of the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth century, the practical fruits of the cardinal doctrines of Christianity were manifesting themselves. Great souls were struggling in the darkness, but near enough to assist them were sooner or later found, to their surprise, those whose experience could have assisted them. They fought the battle alone—yet not alone.

Of the different leaders that in their respective places laid the foundation for an advanced and aggressive Christianity, Philip William Otterbein occupied, among the increasing German population of America, a position altogether his own. To say that he was the first among the Germans of this country to preach the truth as to a deep evangelical experience, would not be true. The Congregation of God in the Spirit, formed ten years before Mr. Otterbein's coming to this country, presents a number of names of enlightened Christians. But their field and their type of piety were peculiar. Both in the Reformed and Lutheran churches there was need of the heart-elements to which these men gave prominence. If there were presented some distortions, over against the same, in the churches of the times, were even graver defects. The condition of the Reformed Church had not been one of peace and agreement. Many that had a lively remembrance of the liberal character of the German Reformed Church in Europe had resisted the rigid Calvinism that began to prevail through the patronage that was bestowed by the church of Holland. This rigor in doctrine was also associated with opposition to evangelical tendencies. The Reformed Church on its part, by confusing a deep and glowing spiritual life with the unwarranted

subjectivism that discovered itself more or less distinctly in the adherents of the Congregation of God in the Spirit, and in the Moravians as a body, and by thus opposing both, laid the foundation for many difficulties and misfortunes in the years that followed.

While there is no evidence of any connection between the Congregation of God in the Spirit and the work begun by Mr. Otterbein, there were yet elements that they had in common, and oppositions that they alike experienced. Those connected with the Congregation of God in the Spirit were Arminian and evangelical, but perilously subjective. The movement under Mr. Otterbein was Arminian and evangelical, but it sought to maintain a safe relation to sober and recognized elements. Yet the latter movement was viewed by some as too subjective for health and safety.

Some have endeavored, leaving out of view wild and spurious extremes, to point out two types of piety,—the one characterized more by the subjective, and the other characterized more by the objective. The former is spoken of as Platonic; that is, contemplative, looking into the feelings, and through the feelings to God and divine things. It looks more to sanctification than justification. In its purer and loftier forms it bears upon its forehead the mark of its divinity,

and carries about it an atmosphere more of heaven than of earth. But it has its imminent perils and its specious counterfeits. The other type might be called the Aristotelian, because of its regard for outward things,—especially form. It requires the authentication that comes from a wide comparison of the mind's data. It leans hard upon the Bible,—the objective word. It lays stress on doctrine, and gives prominence to the law and righteousness. It prizes the church and the ordinances. With it the constantly recurring theme is justification,—the most objective of all the Bible doctrines touching man. It knows how to deal with earthly things and builds wisely and lastingly. It is likely to be Calvinistic, by placing the condition as well as the source of salvation without man. This type has likewise its perils and deceptions. Dead forms, which certainly can do nothing for religion or the soul, are the frequent cause of harm and offense.

In the phase of Christianity that revealed itself in the general revival-movement, above referred to, the types here described were for the first time, to any marked degree, consciously combined. Before, in all genuine Christianity, they had existed in "unconscious equipoise." Though slowly developing in their distinct character, and though marked by sharp contrasts, they had long been

changing eyes, and at length made a decisive step toward a permanent union. If we can properly appreciate objective elements; if we can take Christ and the great facts of his redeeming work, and secure as an experience within us what he has done for us; if we can make our state of grace so much of an object that we will see to its special promotion, and make inward assurance, upon scriptural grounds, the test of our spiritual standing, we may hope for the greatest advance in Christ's kingdom. We must have the means and securities that the outer affords. It is the part of the soul to receive salvation and to know inwardly and assuredly that it rests on "redemption ground." A Christianity properly combining these elements can flourish in the noons as well as in the twilights, will promote righteousness as well as revivals, and all of its forms will exhibit the pulsations of life.

Let the whole character and career of Mr. Otterbein be impartially examined, and then if there should be those that conscientiously think that the type of religious life manifested in his heart and life-work was less conformable to the biblical standard, or less efficient in securing the salvation of souls than the prevailing type, let them thus continue to think. Undoubtedly some good men did thus think. But if he was opposed

even by some good men that misunderstood him, or by evil men whose opposition to the gospel and contention against him were one and the same, all fair-minded men will be willing that this should be dispassionately brought to view.

In their character and course, Mr. Otterbein and Mr. Wesley in many respects resembled each other. While they were independently moved upon, and while there was no connection between them, they each were joined by others, who, moved likewise by an independent impulse, came forward as co-workers. In the sphere in which Mr. Otterbein moved, the times were ripe. The spell of mere time-thoughts was breaking. God's finger was moving upon the dial to the appointed hour, and chosen men were preparing to appear in their place.

One of the results of Mr. Otterbein's enlarged liberty was a modification of his manner of preaching. Before this he had used manuscript in the pulpit; but now he had something direct, practical, experimental to urge upon the people, and found manuscript unnecessary and calculated to trammel.


It would be deemed ironical, perhaps, to assert that another result of his spiritual enlightenment was the casting off of any Calvinism that may still have attached to him. We know that at an

early period he became Arminian in theology. It would doubtless be erroneous to refer his positive opposition to Calvin's doctrine of predestination to a date much anterior to his going to Baltimore, though the contrary doctrine must long before have obtained practical possession of his mind. His struggle of heart, which was more or less protracted; his effort to secure practical attendance to the claims of religion on the part of an undisciplined congregation; his determination to place responsibility on the people; his practical tendency and aversion to dogmatic paradoxes; his experience of grace so freely given; and the stirring in his mind of the lingering influences from Melancthon, which had been so deeply planted throughout the Rhenish provinces, may have been factors in producing the change.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MINISTRY AT TULPEHOCKEN.

The Tulpehocken Settlement — The Church — Pleasant Features — Stahlschmidt's Testimony — New Measures — The Prayer-meeting — Return of the Social, or Laical Spirit.

HEN in 1758 Mr. Otterbein resigned his pastorate at Lancaster, he expected to visit the fatherland, with the possibility of his not returning to America. At this time, however, France and England were arrayed against each other in America, in what is called the French and Indian War, and at the same time were hostile parties in the terrible Seven Years' War in Europe. Passage upon the ocean was thus full of peril, and on both sides of the Atlantic fear and bloodshed stood in the face of any safe or comfortable changes. Besides, it was already October when Mr. Otterbein resigned at Lancaster. In this condition of things, he temporarily took charge of the Reformed church at Tulpehocken.

In the early annals of Pennsylvania, the Tulpehocken country holds a prominent place. The country was first settled by refugees from the



Palatinate in Germany, who, about 1709, by the commiseration of Queen Anne had been invited to England, and thence by her bounty had been transferred in 1710 to New York. In 1713 one hundred and fifty families went to Schoharie, west of Albany, where they settled on lands that had been donated for their use by an Indian chief, who, while on a visit to England, had looked upon their distress as they lay camped in the outskirts of London. Having neglected, in taking possession of their lands, to comply with the formalities of the laws of New York, they were put to much distress; and at length, in 1723, a considerable number of families moved toward the Susquehanna, floated down that river in rudely constructed canoes, and after many hardships reached the Tulpehocken country, within the present limits of Berks and Lebanon counties. They settled among the Indians, as it was not until nine years later that the territory comprising these two counties was purchased by the proprietary government. Soon after their settlement they were joined by other families from New York, and other settlers, mostly Germans, from different places. Thus was laid the foundation of an industrious and self-reliant population.

The term Tulpehocken was applied to the settlement from the name of a creek that rises in

Lebanon County, and flowing easterly empties into the Schuylkill at Reading. The name of the creek was itself derived from the name of a tribe of Indians. The settlement proper began in the eastern part of Lebanon County and extended twenty-two miles along Tulpehocken Creek to the vicinity of Reading. As the name of an old frontier community, the designation Tulpehocken was as well understood as that of Reading or Lancaster.

The church that furnished the chief preaching-place for Mr. Otterbein was situated in Lebanon County, about a quarter of a mile west of the Berks County line. The present church, the third in order erected in the same immediate vicinity, stands on the high left bank of the Tulpehocken, overlooking the rich and diversified country about it. The church is a large, substantial, and fine-looking stone structure. The first church was a large wooden building, capable of holding six hundred people. It was erected in 1745, and, when Mr. Otterbein went to Tulpehocken, was both commodious and substantial. Mr. Schlatter, in the first year of his labors in America, came, in company with two other ministers, to Tulpehocken, and preached to a large congregation. At this time the people "could not conceal their exceeding joy and surprise in seeing three ministers together at one time."

Mr. Otterbein's immediate predecessors in the pastorate were Revs. Stoy and Waldschmidt, two of the young ministers in company with whom he came to America. With the rapid filling up of the country, with faithful ministerial work, and with the lapse of a few years, it would be natural to expect that the Tulpehocken church would become large and strong. And this would doubtless have been the case had it not been for the atrocities and depredations of the French and Indian War. For nearly three quarters of a century Pennsylvania had been spared the terrors and calamities that came to all of the other colonies by the hatchet and scalping-knife of the Indians. In 1754 Pennsylvania ceased to be an exception in this respect, and after Braddock's defeat in 1755, no frontier settlement escaped the horrors of bloody massacres and wasted homes. A long list of murders and paralyzing frights mark the portion that fell to the people of Berks and Lebanon counties. The following extract from a letter written in 1755 to Governor Morris by Conrad Weiser, then residing at Tulpehocken, indicates the danger of the times, as well as the spirit of the people: "My company had now increased to about three hundred men, mostly well armed, though about twenty men had nothing but axes and pitchforks. All unanimously agreed to die

together, and to engage the enemy wherever we should meet them, and so obstruct their way of marching further into the inhabited parts, till others of our brethren could come up and do the same, and so save the lives of our wives and our children." \*

The depredations, though much abated after 1756, still continued till 1763. Mr. Otterbein had rather to contend against the desolations that had already been made than to face new atrocities. Yet the rapidity with which prosperity would again manifest itself when once the destroyers could be held at bay, would be a surprise to any one unacquainted with frontier or provincial life.

It has been supposed from some early references, that Mr. Otterbein served a charge of two comparatively equal congregations; but there seems to be no valid ground for this opinion. St. Jacob's (Quitapahilla) Church, about three miles north of Lebanon, was perhaps the second church spoken of as connected with the Tulpehocken church in 1746, but already in 1747 it became part of a separate charge. He doubtless preached occasionally for this congregation; but this would have been merely to supply the place of old Father Templeman, who from affliction was unable to perform all of his duties as pastor between

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\* Rupp's History of Berks and Lebanon counties, pp. 44, 45.

1757 and 1760. This assistance neighboring ministers had promised to render. Mr. Otterbein's ministry was likely employed more in the direction of Reading, where he may have regularly served one or more congregations, besides preaching at the church already described. While he does not seem to have had as many regular preaching-places as some others that preached at Tulpehocken, his ministry, in one form and another, took an ample range.

As might have been expected from their history, the people of Tulpehocken had marked and stubborn peculiarities. When annoyed by the authorities of New York, they beat the officers that were sent to dispossess them. In Pennsylvania they were very much afraid of sects and new opinions in religion, and raised a wall against all intrusion of this character. But, to quote from Dr. Harbaugh, "As is too often the case in their zeal to keep fanatics *out* of their circle, they were not so diligent as they should have been to cherish the true Christian spirit within." Just as might have been anticipated, they, by not seeking to know the truth, and to nourish within themselves a true spiritual life, prepared themselves for the wildest freaks of fanaticism. When Conrad Beissel of the anomalous Protestant monastic society at Ephrata went into the "dark region of

Tulpehocken," he found a ripe field for his vagaries. The spirit of resistance to innovations in Tulpehocken manifested itself as late as 1829 in a famous meeting of indignant "freemen" to protest against "Bible and missionary societies, theological seminaries, and Sunday-school unions," as "works of supererogation," and to assert the rightfulness of "hilarity" and "innocent amusements." Between the shadows of the earlier and the later times, let us see if we can find a green spot for the ministry of Mr. Otterbein. But it must not be supposed that all was dark outside of his short term, or that all within this term was bright.

With all the allowances that have to be made, his two years at Tulpehocken were, in some respects, the Galilean period of his ministry. Routine duties did not so fully engage him as was the case at Lancaster. Notwithstanding the proverbial stubbornness of the people, his spirit had a sufficient sphere in which to abound, and no barriers were strong enough to keep him from grounding himself in the affections and esteem of the people. Doubtless some true spiritual seed had been placed in the minds of the people by religious books that had been given to the refugees by the court-chaplain of St. James, before their departure from London. The principal

one of these books, a book whose fruits were often met in America, was Arndt's *True Christianity*.

The following from a book written by Rev. John Christian Stahl Schmidt indicates the esteem in which he was held, after a separation of thirteen years from the Tulpehocken people, as well as his friendly relations with the author of the book: "In the early spring Mr. Otterbein came to Lebanon to visit a friend named Stoy, who had gone to that country with him as a theologian, but who now was a practicing physician. With Mr. Stoy I was well acquainted, and as I visited him sometimes I found Mr. Otterbein with him, and learned for the first time to know him personally. He was a very gentle and friendly man, and because of his pious, godly manner of life was highly esteemed throughout the land. He showed to myself, after I had the good fortune to form his acquaintance, much friendship and kindness, for which I also make my hearty acknowledgment. He is the only one in that country with whom I now have a correspondence. After I had a long talk with him, and he through his friendliness had obtained my confidence, I confessed to him my outward, and in some measure my inward condition. He took a sincere interest in the same; and because he knew the house where I was staying, he told me

that I might come to him at York, where he was then preaching, and that he would then see what would be best for me to do. The state of my mind I could tell to no one, for I did not know it myself. In the many storms of life I had lost sails, masts, rudder, and compass, and my ship was tossed hither and thither; but the Lord was guiding it nevertheless. \* \* \* I was more than six weeks with Mr. Otterbein at York, and preached twice in town and once in the country. I told Mr. Otterbein that as far as I was acquainted with myself I could not go on preaching, as I did not feel liberty enough. He told me that I ought not to preach unless I had full liberty of mind toward it.” \*

The author of the book from which the above extract is taken was well acquainted with Mr. Otterbein. When about to return to Europe he spent three weeks with him at Baltimore. He afterward became acquainted with Mr. Otterbein's youngest brother. Mr. Stahl Schmidt had made, before his coming to America, two visits to the famous Tersteegen, and had been encouraged and instructed by him. In the longing for purity of heart and in the appreciation of spiritual religion, Otterbein and Stahl Schmidt were alike; though the former was not made halting

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\* *Pilgerreise*, 288-290.



and unpractical by the one-sided mysticism of the latter.

The condition of the German churches being what it was, one can easily see that trial and labor would fall to the lot of Mr. Otterbein during his term at Tulpehocken. He could not suit his ministrations to the prevailing taste. As has already been seen, his spiritual susceptibilities received special quickening while he was at Lancaster. The difficulties at Tulpehocken only served to draw him out in new efforts for the salvation of the people. He preached on weekdays as well as on Sunday, and visited and exhorted old and young at their homes. He introduced evening meetings for prayer and personal instruction. "On these occasions his custom was to read a portion of scripture, make some practical remarks on the same, and exhort all present to give place to serious reflections. He would then sing a sacred hymn, and invite all to kneel and accompany him in prayer. At first, and for some time, but few, if any, would kneel, and he was permitted to pray alone. \* \* \* After prayer he would endeavor to gain access to their hearts by addressing them individually with words of kindness and love." \* These meetings while prayer-meetings, were social meetings in the

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\* Spayth, pp. 23, 24.

broadest sense. The effect of these endeavors was such as might have been expected. Some of the people became awakened and wept over their lost condition, and others mocked; but the work went forward. These meetings were an advance upon the interviews before communion that were provided for at Lancaster, and they seem to have been entirely new to the English as well as to the Germans in America. Mr. Otterbein, however, was not moving without precedent.

The precedent was not so much in such meetings as the "colleges of piety" of Spener, or the meetings of the "religious societies" in England. Wesley's class-meetings, likewise, were not prayer-meetings. As early as 1742 Wesley appointed special meetings for prayer, but they were not stated prayer-meetings. About 1692 Francke introduced prayer-meetings in Halle. About 1709 Porst introduced them in Berlin. The fact that in 1749 Mr. Otterbein was required to hold a regular weekly prayer-meeting has already been noticed. When the prayer-meeting was introduced at Tulpehocken, there was perhaps not another of the kind in this country. In Scotland, America, and elsewhere there had been meetings for prayer during seasons of calamity, or during seasons of special grace, but they did not belong to the scheme of regular appointments. Dr. Hendel,

between 1782 and 1795, held regular prayer-meetings every Thursday evening. But in the absence of all modern precedents, Mr. Otterbein would have had a warrant from the nature of Christianity and the nature of man that would have met the case. The Christianity of the Bible is eminently social and unincumbered. But the laity became, in the course of time, supplanted, except in a liturgical way, in the part in worship that it was necessary for their good that they perform. The social character of Christianity has had enemies to meet from the most opposite sources. John Wesley in 1729 himself needed the following energetic address: "Sir, you wish to serve God and go to heaven. Remember you can not serve him alone. You must therefore find companions or make them. The Bible knows nothing of a solitary religion." The deadness of the regular ministry, and of professed Christians in general, was the natural result of this most unnatural silence and inactivity in the body of the church. God meant to bring the laity out from this forced seclusion. Under an impulse manifesting itself independently in many hearts, often not unaccompanied by unsafe elements and destructive tendencies, the movement made itself felt in many different countries. While in some instances those already earnest in religion

drew near to one another and dared, in isolated groups, to reveal the story of their hearts, Mr. Otterbein had in the first place, under God, to raise up such a people, and then to make them helpers one of another, and fellow-laborers with himself, in the work of Christ. In the preceding chapter we saw that Mr. Otterbein was committed to the idea of a spiritual church. We may now add to this principle of his life, his commitment to the lay, or social element in worship, and in the work of the church.

It must not be understood that at this time he meant to be, or understood himself to be, in antagonism to the authorities of the Reformed Church. He felt that there was but one course for the church to pursue. But in America, where the necessity of lay co-operation was the most urgent, opposition of the most contracted and vituperative nature was made.

A letter written by Mr. Otterbein in 1759 to Rev. Conrad Steiner, indicates his regard for church-order, and his views as to the state of the church. Mr. Steiner was evangelical in his views, and was a talented and effective preacher. Mr. Otterbein was his close friend. Mr. Steiner had been unfortunate, if not at fault, in being the occasion of serious trouble in the church at Philadelphia, and subsequently became located at

Frederick, Maryland. The course of Mr. Steiner in accepting in 1759 a call irregularly made, which took him back to Philadelphia, was the occasion of Mr. Otterbein's writing to him. The following are extracts of the letter: "I confess that your unexpected and almost clandestine removal to Philadelphia has not pleased me. I have lately written to you my views on this matter, but the letter has been lost; hence I take the liberty to write you now. To speak plainly upon the matter,—if I am wrong I desire to be corrected,—I can just as little regard your present call to Philadelphia as being divine, as I am convinced of the opposite in regard to the first. Then you lamented that you labored in vain. What offense and disturbance did it then occasion! But has all of this together with the disinclination toward your person now subsided? Has the congregation united, or is this still wanting? Will you not, therefore, be in danger of again laboring in vain? Be assured that I wish it may not be so; and I will rejoice if God will truly unite the church in love one with another, and toward you personally, and build it up through your instrumentality. But as the first attempt has so far failed, there is no hope for the last. I will not say that you should never again have gone to Philadelphia; but taking it for granted that you

have been divinely impelled to take this step, would not the matter have been much more honorable to you, if you had made it known to at least some of the ministers? It would not then have been such cause of offense either to the congregation at Fredericktown, or to others. All that are acquainted with the matter, and that have before esteemed you, speak evil of it. \* \* \* It is true the condition of the cœtus is discouraging. But ought you, in deference to the synods of Holland, to have acted in this manner? And if the cœtus had resisted their decision, which I do not believe, you might then have acted according to your conscience and been excusable. Why do we constantly annoy one another? Why do we misunderstand one another? What will be the final result of all this? When I consider our whole cause I feel too certain that God has given up the pastors and people."

Mr. Otterbein continued at Tulpehocken two years, "with great blessings upon his labors," and then resigned to go to a larger and more laborious field. 7

## CHAPTER V.

### MINISTRY AT FREDERICK.

Character of the Congregation — Various Interests Advanced — Oppositions — Calls to Other Places — Marriage — The Le-Roy Family — Death of Mrs. Otterbein.

**I**N August, 1760, Mr. Otterbein accepted a call from the Reformed congregation at Frederick, Maryland. The year previous he had received a call from the same congregation, but at that time he still hoped to make his visit to Germany, and so declined the call. As the French war continued, and as the need of laborers in America was so great, he concluded to again defer his visit. In a letter written early in 1760 to the synods of Holland, the following passage occurs: "We announce with pleasure that Dominic Otterbein has determined to remain longer with us. He still labors with great energy and success in Tulpehocken. Occasionally he makes a journey to Fredericktown, in Maryland, in order to keep together the sheep who were left without a shepherd by Dominic Steiner, and to feed them with the word of God." He was influenced to accept the second call ten-

dered him chiefly by the fact that the Frederick congregation, being remote from other congregations, could not so easily be supplied by neighboring pastors.

Of the German population about Frederick, in Frederick County, some came directly from the Palatinate, in Germany, about 1712, but a larger number came from the middle colonies. What was true of the settling of the Germans in Frederick County, was true in general of the settling of the Germans in the different parts of Maryland and in Virginia.

The congregation at Frederick, at first called the Monocacy congregation, was formed in 1747, two years after the laying out of the town of Frederick. The congregation was made up mostly of thrifty land-holders, occupying a wide territory about the newly laid-out town. The communicants numbered, when Mr. Otterbein assumed charge, about two hundred. His predecessors in the pastorate were Rev. Theodore Frankenfeld, one of the six young ministers, and Rev. John Conrad Steiner, before referred to. The history of the congregation had been marked, for the most part, by exceptional harmony and prosperity.

Mr. Schlatter, on his visit to the congregation in 1747, said, "I must say of this congregation



that it appears to me to be one of the finest in the whole land, and one in which I have found the most traces of the true fear of God; one that is free from the sects, of which, in other places, the country is full." While the cœtus of the Reformed Church received congregations in Maryland, the authorities in Holland had little to do with congregations outside of Pennsylvania. Mr. Schlatter's part outside of Pennsylvania would be almost correspondingly less. There was therefore in Maryland much less of strenuousness in introducing a rigorous and one-sided church-order. Mr. Schlatter was a strong and good man, but acting under the appointment of the synods of Holland, and following his own disposition as well, he gave more attention to warding against "sects," and introducing "order," than to planting and extending the gospel leaven. In Maryland it would have been comparatively easy to give to evangelical elements a decided preponderance, notwithstanding the prejudices and habits in the way, if only those in authority had sounded the right note. Subsequently there was just enough of suiting to the moral situation to balance parties and multiply bitterness.

Mr. Otterbein's labors at Frederick were much blessed. In 1763 the congregation began to build a large and substantial stone church, to take the

place of the former log structure, or possibly of a church that had succeeded the original log church. The next year the house was nearly enough completed to be used for worship. The building was subsequently remodeled, and was at a later time rebuilt, but the original stone tower still standing, shows that, for those early days, the building was of a superior character. In 1762 a stone parsonage was erected, the lot having been purchased the preceding year. The reason for this procedure will presently appear.

Dr. Daniel Zacharias, pastor at Frederick from 1835 to 1873, in a centenary sermon preached in 1847, after alluding to Mr. Otterbein as a builder, added: "Many other improvements in the external condition of this congregation were likewise made during this period; thus showing that Mr. O. was not only a very pious and devoted pastor, but was also most energetic and efficient in promoting the outward prosperity of the church. A few letters are still preserved in our archives,\* written by Mr. O. while at York, to members of this charge. From these letters, brief as they are, you may easily gather the spirit of the man. Though laboring now in another field, he remembered still, with affectionate kindness and concern, the people whom he had recently left.

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\* These letters can no longer be found.

He mourned over their difficulties, and endeavored to profit them by imparting unto them his godly counsels, and offering up in their behalf his earnest prayers."

But Mr. Otterbein's zeal and labors did not save him from oppositions. Though no pen has recorded the manner of his ministry at Frederick, *it can not be doubted that his ideas of a spiritual church, social meetings, and lay co-operation,* were given a permanent place. Persons that based their claims to church-membership on the fact that they were born and baptized in the church must have gazed with wonder, if not with anger, as the words of Mr. Otterbein went crashing through their formal notions of religion. While one part of the world have ever been prone to trust in moral deeds, another and quite as large a portion, have trusted in the round of ceremonies and the magic of rites.

The following incident, the authority for which has been carefully examined, indicates the shady side among the results of Mr. Otterbein's godly efforts: "At one period the excitement became so great that a majority of the church determined on his summary dismissal; and to effect it most speedily, they locked the church-door against him. On the following Sabbath, when the congregation assembled, his adherents, knowing that

he had a legal right to the pulpit, were disposed to force the door; but he said to them, 'Not so, brethren. If I am not permitted to enter the church peaceably, I can and will preach here in the grave-yard.' So saying, he took his stand upon one of the tombstones, proceeded with the regular introductory services in his usual fervent spirit, delivered a sermon of remarkable power, and at its close announced preaching at the same place on the succeeding Sabbath. At the time appointed an unusually large concourse assembled, and as he was about to commence the services again under the canopy of the heavens, the person who had the key of the church-door hastily opened it, saying, 'Come in, come in! I can stand this no longer.'"\*

While the condition of the German churches in America is on all hands admitted to have been deplorable, it must not be supposed that with the English churches, either as regards theory or practice, the condition of things was so much better. Only ten years before the occurrence just given, Jonathan Edwards was dismissed from his church at Northampton, and going back ten years further, we find John Wesley preaching from his father's tomb at Epworth.

Mr. Otterbein's labors were certainly not con-

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\* Lawrence.

fined to Frederick, though what other congregations he regularly served is not known. His predecessor had preached at Winchester and at two other places in Virginia. He preached also in Maryland on the Potomac (likely Antietam), in the mountains (likely Middletown), and on Pipe Creek. He had also other appointments. In connection with his work at Frederick, Mr. Otterbein doubtless preached at all of the places named, and at others besides, though not at all of the places regularly.

While Mr. Otterbein was at Frederick his labors were sought by other congregations. In 1761 the congregations at Reading and Oley, in Berks County, presented to him a call. This call, however, he refused to entertain on the ground that he could not leave a charge upon which he had so lately entered. The congregation at Reading had not, at this time, yet had the services of a regular pastor.

In the spring of 1763 he received a call from the Reformed church in Philadelphia, which he was urged by the cœtus to accept. By circumstances beyond his control he was prevented from accepting the call. The following letters relating to this matter, written by Mr. Otterbein, and kindly furnished by Dr. David Van Horne, the present pastor of the church in Philadelphia, in-

dicate so well not only his attitude to the call, but also so much of his character and spirit, that they are given in full:

FIRST LETTER.—*Dear Sirs and Friends:*—Day before yesterday I received your letter. I am sorry for the circumstances in which you are. In response to your desire for me, I can not now say anything with certainty. The case is a difficult one for me. I will think of it. I do not know what the condition of your church is,—as to whether there is harmony in it or not. I hate strife. It is an unpleasant thing to go into difficulties. Hitherto I have not suffered myself to be trammelled, nor do I dare to suffer myself to be trammelled. You may consider the matter, and I will do the same. I have no more time to write, for the person that will take this communication along with him is in a hurry. The Lord be with you.

Your sincere friend,

W. OTTERBEIN.

FREDERICKTOWN, May 24, 1763.

SECOND LETTER.—*Dear Sirs and Friends:*—I have received your letter through Mr. Clampffer and Mr. Wack. It is not necessary, at this time, that I write in detail. I hope, if the Lord wills, and I live, to see you on the 26th of June, and to preach for you. Both of your honorable deputies urged me strongly to go down with them. It is, however, quite impossible for me to do so at this time. You must blame

no one but myself for my not coming sooner. My circumstances will not permit any other course. I dare by no means to desert the congregation that I have here, as I must necessarily see them in some measure satisfied before I could leave them to go to you. You may, if God grants me health, expect me at the appointed time. The Lord be with you.

Your sincere friend,

W. OTTERBEIN.

FREDERICKTOWN, June 6, 1763.

THIRD LETTER.—*Dear Sirs and Friends:*—I have tried to satisfy this church, but can hardly make a success of it. I am sorry. I have already told you the circumstances. The people allege that they, on my account, have incurred unusual expenses, and that they next year would build a new church; also that, if I leave them, the church may not be built, and that the present debts may rest upon a few; and furthermore, that my going would surely cause disturbance and give offense. Truly I am in a perplexing situation. If I leave here I shall give offense, and if I do not go to you, this will not be taken well. But how would it do if you would have patience until next year? It may be that by that time the circumstances will change so that I could go without so much offense. I know of no other way. You may assuredly believe that it is my wish that you were helped. But I do not see how it can be done at this time without much censure being brought upon me. I pray that you will not become angry

with me, for I do the best that I can. Have a little more patience. It may be that some one will come in this fall; then all will be right. But should no one come, I can go, in accordance with the circumstances here, better next year. Consider this matter aright, and I know that you will yourselves see this to be the best. May the Lord direct all according to his will, and for the most good. I greet you. The grace of God be with you, esteemed gentlemen and friends.

Your sincere friend and servant,

W. OTTERBEIN.

FREDERICKTOWN, July 9, 1763.

FOURTH LETTER.—*Dear Sirs and Friends*:—I have received your letter. Mr. Alsentz wrote to me that perhaps Mr. Leydich could come to my place here. This would satisfy me. If this place can be supplied, I am willing, as soon as it can be done, to go to you. Otherwise I can not promise to go this year. The offense that I would give thereby would be too great. You know this well yourselves, and also how you would yourselves feel in the same circumstances. In Tulpehocken the situation would be a little different, for Mr. Kurtz' brother is there, and is serving the congregation. I can tell you frankly that I am willing to serve you; but if Mr. Leydich can not come, then have patience for this year. I will then, if the Lord wills, next year, go to you. And if you find it for good, I will go this fall to you, and be



with you for two or three Sundays. The Lord be with you. I greet you.

Sincerely yours,

W. OTTERBEIN.

FREDERICKTOWN, August 23, 1763.

The Philadelphia congregation had been since 1749, for the most of the time, in a divided and distracted state. "Its restless spirit, contrary to the omen and presage of its name," was always stirring up new troubles. "Feud had followed upon feud from year to year, and from one brief pastorate to another." For a short time before the call given to Mr. Otterbein, the congregation had been afflicted with the ministry of an intemperate man. This man, though rejected, had sufficient influence to draw off a part of the church-membership and establish a rival congregation. Some in the church at Philadelphia complained that Mr. Otterbein's voice was weak; but this must be interpreted as meaning, more than anything else, the existence of a dissatisfied party in the church; for Mr. Otterbein's voice, though not the strongest, was far from weak. Though the Philadelphia congregation yet stood the strongest, at least the most important, Reformed congregation in America, Mr. Otterbein's regard for a prior obligation kept him from becoming its pastor. In November, 1763, the congregation

found it possible to obtain Dr. Weyberg as pastor, and he was thereupon chosen.

On the 19th of April, 1762, Mr. Otterbein was married in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to Miss Susan LeRoy.\* Rev. William Stoy officiated. Miss LeRoy was of French Huguenot descent. In 1685, Louis XIV. of France revoked the edict of Nantes. Four hundred thousand of the best citizens of France sought homes in other countries. Among these the LeRoy family fled and obtained an asylum in Switzerland, apparently in or near Basle. As early as 1690 large numbers of self-exiled Huguenots came to America. In 1754 Abraham LeRoy, the father of Mrs. Otterbein, resolved to follow, with his family, in this course. In leaving their home in Switzerland they passed through some Catholic territory. On their way one of the children died; and as the parents did not wish to bury their child at the place where they were, they took the corpse for some distance with them. Having stopped at a public house kept by Catholics, who soon became aware that a dead Protestant child had been brought into their house, they were loaded with curses, and a complete renovation of the house was begun.

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\* In view of the total want of information in regard to Mr. Otterbein's marriage, it was no common pleasure to the author to discover with his own eyes the entry to the effect above given, in the Lancaster church-books. Other sources of information have since been found.

The Protestant spirit of the LeRois is shown by an occurrence at another point on their way. The father noticed a Catholic procession approaching, with the host carried in front, before which all that might stand near were expected to do reverence. This Abraham LeRoy was too much of a Huguenot to do. He, instead, prudently turned his family into an alley near by, and waited till the procession had passed.

In the fall of 1754 the family, consisting of the parents, one son, and four daughters, reached Pennsylvania, and soon made Lancaster their home. John Jacob LeRoy, a brother of Abraham LeRoy, came to America in 1752, and in 1755 was killed by the Indians. Shortly after Abraham LeRoy and his family came to this country the parents became dissatisfied, and soon returned to Switzerland, leaving behind them, however, all of their children except the youngest. Again in Switzerland, they soon became anxious to return to Pennsylvania, but were prevented for a time by the dangers resulting from the war between France and England. Not long after their return to this country, Abraham LeRoy and his son, also called Abraham, died. Their death occurred in 1764 or 1765. They together left to Susan Otterbein about one thousand five hundred dollars.

Dr. William Hendel was married about 1766 to Elizabeth LeRoy, one of the four sisters. The family spoke German as well as French. The mother, though, loved her French, and often were homeless and homesick French people comforted and entertained at the home of the LeRoys.

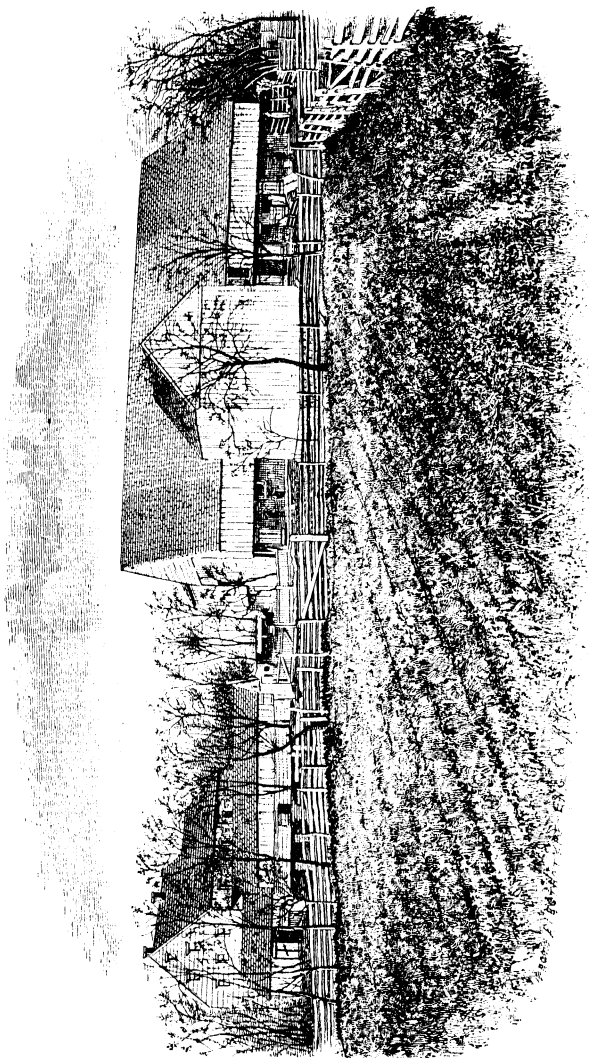
Mr. Otterbein became acquainted with his future wife during his ministry at Lancaster. Five years and a half, however, elapsed after he left Lancaster before the marriage took place, he spending two of these years at Tulpehocken and the remainder of the time at Frederick. At this time Mr. Otterbein was thirty-five years old, and his bride was twenty-six. A letter written to the synods of Holland in the year of the marriage contained the following: "Dominie Otterbein has entered the state of matrimony in deference to public opinion, which in America requires that a minister should be a married man." It may be supposed, though, that the letter represents but one side of the affair.

Mrs. Otterbein only lived six years after her marriage. She died April 27th, 1768, aged thirty-two years and five months. It is not certain whether she died at Lancaster or at York, but it is certain that she was buried at the former place. No children were left by this marriage. Henceforth Mr. Otterbein walked alone,

"And would not change his buried love  
For any one of living mold."

After nearly a half century had passed over him, he could still manifest the power of his undiminished affection. It is a beautiful tradition, that only two days before his death he requested a friend to bring a pocket-book, made by the tender hands then so long motionless in death, and that gazing upon the carefully preserved keepsake, he kissed it with all the fondness of a youthful lover. We can not know the weight of the shadows that fell upon Mr. Otterbein's life from his early bereavement.





ISAAC LONG'S HOUSE AND BARN.

## CHAPTER VI.

### MINISTRY AT YORK.

History of the Congregation — Labors Rewarded — Meeting at Isaac Long's — Time of the Meeting — Visit to Germany — Incidents — The Farewell and Return — Concludes his Labors at York.

**I**N September, 1765, Mr. Otterbein transferred his labors from Frederick, Maryland, to York, Pennsylvania. The reason for the change was partly, perhaps, the condition of the church at York, which for two years had been without a settled pastor.\* There may have been divisions in the church at Frederick; for the next pastorate was certainly not free from them.

We must not forget that Mr. Otterbein, in changing from Frederick to York, had, in the full sense of the term, to move. He now had a wife to take with him. The articles belonging to house and home would exact the usual amount of attention. In going to York, Mrs. Otterbein

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\* "There was now a vacancy in the church for about two years. William Otterbein commenced his labors in September, 1765."—*Glossbrenner's History of York County.*



would be much nearer to her relatives at Lancaster.

York, at first called Little York, was laid out in 1741, and ten years later it contained one hundred and ninety houses. In 1765 it was a considerable town, full of life and affairs. It had the advantage of being the chief place west of the Susquehanna.

A Reformed church was organized at York at an early day, there being many Reformed in York County. The first Reformed church-building in the town was erected in 1746. A stone church was begun in 1763, but as the vacancy in the pastorate occurred at this time, the completing of the house, in all probability, remained for Mr. Otterbein's period.

The first pastor, Rev. Jacob Lischy, who served the congregation from 1745 to 1760, not without important breaks however, presented a strange mixture of good and bad qualities—the latter at least in the end predominating. At times he seemed to be a chosen instrument in promoting a great spiritual work; but throughout his course there was an evident want of consistency and conscientiousness, and the close of his career gave to the enemies of spiritual religion abundant occasion for gainsaying. The confusion following must have extended to Mr. Otterbein's

time. It was left for Mr. Otterbein to show that the greatest attention to the spiritual life finds at the same time its requirement and its rule in what belongs to a higher sphere than human subjectivism and caprice—even in God's word.

Notwithstanding the continued distractions and embarrassments, the congregation, when he assumed charge, was large and important. He seems to have had one or two country appointments in addition to his work in town. But his regular work did not prevent his traveling and preaching elsewhere extensively. He occasionally visited Maryland, as well as different parts of Pennsylvania. One of the meetings that he attended was so memorable that it must be described somewhat at length, though the general circumstances of the meeting will be given more fully in the following chapter.

There had been a great spiritual awakening in which a Mennonite minister, Martin Boehm, was at first a noted subject, and then an acknowledged leader and efficient promoter. He came in contact with others of a like experience while on a visit to Virginia, and subsequently, in connection with Virginia preachers, held "great meetings" in different parts of Lancaster County. At the time referred to, Mr. Boehm had appointed a meeting on Whitsuntide, at Isaac Long's, six

miles north-east of Lancaster. The meeting was held in a large barn.\* Mr. Otterbein was present, whether by invitation or of his own appointing is not known. He and Boehm had not before met. His preaching at New Providence, during his Lancaster term, brought him to within a few miles of Mr. Boehm's residence; yet the harsh treatment that the Mennonites had received at the hands of the Reformed in Switzerland, and the great gulf that continued between the Mennonites and the Reformed, is sufficient explanation for the fact that they had not met each other. Mr. Boehm, too, was just entering upon his ministry when Mr. Otterbein left for Tulpehocken. *The large barn could not hold the people. An overflow meeting was appointed to be held in the orchard, to be addressed by a Virginia preacher that was present.* Mr. Otterbein listened as Boehm unfolded the truths of the gospel; as he uttered with exulting freedom and resistless force truths that his own mind and soul, through deep pangs and struggles, had apprehended. As Boehm concluded his sermon, and before he could sit down, Mr. Otterbein, moved by an overpowering conviction of new-found fellowship in the

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\* The barn was built of stone, was one hundred and eight feet long, and proportionately wide, and contained on the floor above the basement six mows. It is still standing. The house standing at that time likewise still stands.

truth, clasped Boehm in his arms and exclaimed, "We are brethren!" Boehm was a man rather under medium height, wore his beard long, and was clad in the plain, neat Mennonite costume. Mr. Otterbein, on the other hand, was a large man and of commanding appearance, and in his bearing and dress strictly parsonic. Their ecclesiastical relations were in striking contrast. The effect, therefore, of this episode could not fail to be of the most dramatic character. "Unable to repress their emotions, some in the congregation praised the Lord aloud; but the greater part were bathed in tears, and all hearts seemed melted into one." To those present the occasion was, more than merely in name, a true Whitsuntide—a present Pentecost. Is it strange that this meeting should furnish the starting-point for a religious movement that should assume, as the years passed, great dimensions, or an inexplicable thing that, in time, a new religious society should be the result?

The great meeting at Isaac Long's has such historic importance that it is of interest that the time at which it was held should be fixed within as narrow limits as possible. Let us give the patient attention of a few moments to this point. Some have placed the meeting as early as Mr. Otterbein's Frederick or Tulpehocken ministry,

and some even as early as his Lancaster ministry. But all dates prior to his Frederick ministry are shut off by considerations coming from the side of Boehm. Dates, too, falling within his Frederick ministry are made unlikely, if not impossible, by the distance of Frederick from Lancaster County, and by the fact that the circle of Mr. Otterbein's labors lay to the south rather than to the north. Mr. Otterbein did not leave Frederick until the fall of 1765, and could not therefore have attended a meeting in Lancaster County on Whitsuntide before 1766. We have, then, a limit before which the meeting could not have occurred.

A point bearing somewhat upon the case is this: The Isaac Long meeting was some time before the Methodist preachers began to preach in Lancaster County, and some time before Martin Boehm had met any of them. These preachers appeared upon the scene between 1775 and 1780. Henry Boehm says that they first came to his father's house about 1775, though a later date is more probable. Mr. Spayth, in a manuscript address still preserved, says, "This meeting was held as early as 1770, and not later." As Mr. Otterbein, as will presently be seen, went to Europe in April, 1770, he could not have been present at a Whitsuntide meeting in that year. The date of

the meeting, as indicated by this testimony, would be, therefore, between 1766 and 1769. But there are other testimonies.

The paper containing the charges on which Boehm was expelled from the Mennonite Church is still preserved.\* The Mennonites believe that the paper belongs to a time as early as "1775, or between 1775 and 1780." The reference to the "sword of revenge," with its attendant calamities "very near to the door," would refer to the Revolutionary War, which brought such trials to the non-combatant Mennonites. More precisely the reference suits the year 1777. The reason why the Mennonites incidentally mention 1780 as a limiting date is the testimony of Christian Kauffman, from which it is certain that he was present at the meetings held by Martin Boehm before 1780, and that at this time Martin Boehm was not connected with the Mennonites. The authority for the Mennonite view as to the date of the manuscript as before given, furnishes also the more exact statement that "the manuscript was written, without doubt, about the year 1775."

The paper says, "It is a well known fact that between us and Martin Boehm there is, in many respects, a difference of views; and we have at times, for several years already, labored to become

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\* See next chapter.

more of one mind." That the complaints were due to Boehm's associations with Otterbein and like men is evident from the following: "He [Boehm] had a great deal to do with forming a union and associating with men (professors) that allow themselves to walk on the broad way, practicing warfare and the swearing of oaths." But how long previous to the writing of the paper did this union and the things that offended the Mennonites occur? The expression in the paper, "several years," is of course indefinite. But some light is thrown upon it by other statements found in the paper. It is said, "Some of the aged laborers that were not satisfied with him [Boehm] have passed away, and we and Boehm are also on the way to eternity." Again, it is said, "We continually feared what is now before us, a division in the church." The evidence of long delay and continued struggle is found in every part of the lengthy paper, making it probable that a period of not less than ten years was consumed in this way. But if the paper was written as early as 1775 to 1777, even a less number of years would reach back to the period 1766 to 1769.

Yet we can narrow the limits given by at least one year. Rev. Abraham Hershey, in an article published in 1842, says, "In 1768 I saw Father Otterbein." Now, Mr. Hershey was at that time

a small boy living at home. His father lived a mile and a half from Isaac Long's place. The Hersheys and the Longs were all Mennonites, and were otherwise closely associated. It is plain that Abraham Hershey could only have seen Mr. Otterbein after associations with the Mennonites had brought him into the Isaac Long neighborhood. Mennonites, in those times, were not taking their families and going a distance to Reformed meetings. Also a strong impression, as from some unusual occurrence, must have been made on Abraham Hershey's mind to have enabled him, even with the many references that he must have subsequently heard from those that mingled in those early meetings, to carry a distinct date all through his long life. We are indebted to Abraham Hershey for other points of interest in relation to those early times. It is not clear from his reference to the year 1768 that the original Isaac Long meeting must have been in that year, but only that it could not have been later, or much before. From some cause he may not have been present at the first meeting or meetings at which Mr. Otterbein was present. A reference will be found in a subsequent chapter that will seem to indicate the year 1766 as the precise year for the first meeting at which Mr. Otterbein was present. From 1766 to 1768, how-



ever, is the closest approximation that, with any confidence, can be made.

In April, 1770, Mr. Otterbein made his long contemplated visit to his relatives and friends in Germany. As he purposed, God willing, to return to America, and as the congregation at York was unwilling to give him up, he went without resigning his charge, his place being filled during his absence by other ministers. The time chosen for the visit was propitious. Europe was at peace.

Eighteen years had elapsed since he left relatives and friends in Germany to become a missionary to America. How will he find them on his return? His noble mother was still alive. She was kindly cared for by her son John Charles, whose life was spent in the Herborn school. John Henry, the oldest brother of Philip William, was at Burbach. George Godfrey was at the important city of Duisburg. John Daniel was at Berleburg. Henry Daniel was at Kecken. A sister was perhaps alive. At this time there were also a number of other Otterbeins serving as ministers at different places. We can poorly imagine what must have been the joy of this large number of relatives, especially of the aged mother, at receiving back the returning *Americaner*, as said by the Germans, then as now.

An affecting scene was presented when the American Otterbein visited his brother George Godfrey, the pastor at Duisburg. As Duisburg was situated nearer the place of debarkation than were the places of the other Otterbeins, George Godfrey was likely the first brother met. After the first welcome salutation and the evening meal, the brothers, in the privacy of the study, unfolded to each other their most intimate thoughts. Philip William, without reserve, and with a full heart, related the story of his spiritual experience. George Godfrey listened with the deepest attention, and rising from his chair embraced his brother, and as the tears streamed down his cheeks said, "My dear William, we are now, blessed be the name of the Lord, not only brothers after the flesh, but also after the spirit. I have also experienced the same blessing. I can testify that God has power on earth to forgive sins and to cleanse from all unrighteousness."\*

At another time, when Philip William was walking in the field with the brother just named, the latter turned to him and said with emphasis and feeling, "My dear brother, I have a very strong impression that God has a great work for you to do in America." Though George Godfrey was the younger, he exerted, through his

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\* See *Unity Magazine*, Vol. III., No. 1.

intimacy and living religious experience, a great influence on his American brother.

A tradition, the line of which is distinctly pointed out, is to the following effect: The American Otterbein was visiting his oldest brother at Burbach, and on a very hot Sunday afternoon preached in his shirt-sleeves for two hours to the Burbach congregation.

After this visit the Burbach Otterbein held, every morning, a short devotional meeting in the church. When some one told him that in consequence of not many attending, the meeting might as well be dropped, he replied, "I will do my duty; others may do as they please."

It can readily be seen that the nine or ten months that Mr. Otterbein felt at liberty to devote to his visit, considering the number of persons and places to be visited, would be well filled up. An indication of the time of his return to America is found in a paper belonging to the Burbach church archives. In this paper John Henry Otterbein, in connection with items belonging to the year 1771, said, "The monthly session of the presbytery for the month of February was not held, for I was at Herborn to say good-by to my American brother." It is likely that at that good-by meeting all of the Otterbein brothers, six in all, along with their aged and

widowed mother, were present. The scene must have been sadder than the similar scene of nineteen years before. They could not all meet again. None of the brothers died before 1800, but the mother's life came to a close in the short course of seven years. Philip William was not again to visit Germany, and, as the event proved, was not again to look into the countenance of a member of his family.

He doubtless this time, as before, embarked from Holland. Different writers have said that he reached America in September or October. But as the farewell meeting was in February, he probably reached America in April or May. After his departure from Herborn, he may, however, have remained a short time at Duisburg with his brother George Godfrey, or he may have remained a short time in Holland.

On his return he resumed his labors at York. His "itinerant" labors were likewise continued.

In April, 1774, he resigned his pastorate at York to assume a new charge at Baltimore, Maryland. His ministry at York had been full of varied experiences. In the third year of his pastorate he buried his wife. Beginning his labors when the church was in a disorganized state, and with a church-building to complete, his labors at the first must have been arduous. Prosperity, however,

attended him in his various labors. During this period he made the visit just referred to to Europe. Here, too, began, in a special sense, that line of labors that marked so emphatically his subsequent course.

In the next chapter will be noticed the character and course of some of his co-laborers, and some of the facts connected with the beginning of the great and almost spontaneous union movement among the Germans of America.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CO-LABORERS.

**The Mennonites—Ancestors of Martin Boehm—Birth and Early Life of Boehm—His Selection for the Ministry—Conversion—Visit to Virginia—The “Virginia Preachers”—Meeting at Isaac Long’s—The Religious Movement—Boehm’s Preaching—The River Brethren—Condition of the Mennonites—Mennonite Opposition—Boehm Expelled—George Adam Geeting—His Conversion—Becomes a Preacher—His Home on the Antietam—Close Relations with Mr. Otterbein—Other Laborers.**

**A**MONG the people that have not received their proper meed of honorable recognition are the original Mennonites of Europe. They were spiritual and subject to discipline when these qualities were rare, and still more rarely united. Because of their opposition to infant baptism, to the taking of oaths, and to the bearing of arms, they were everywhere subjects of persecution. At length toleration was extended to them in Holland. But the emperor of Germany and the Reformed in Switzerland continued to persecute.

The first Mennonites that came to this country came in 1683 in response to an invitation extended

to them by William Penn to join his colony in America. The Quakers, who first settled Pennsylvania, and the Mennonites had many things in common. The first Lancaster County Mennonites came in 1709. They were the first settlers of the county. In 1735 there were five hundred families of Mennonites in Lancaster County alone.

Martin Boehm, whose history is now to be sketched, belonged to this people. His father came to America in 1715. Jacob Boehm, the great-grandfather of Martin Boehm, belonged to a respectable family in Switzerland, and was a strict member of the Reformed Church. His son, likewise called Jacob, having completed his apprenticeship for a trade, was, according to the custom of the time, to spend three years in travel as a journeyman. In his wanderings he fell in with the Pietists, and was converted to their views and manner of life. When he returned home, his singular experience, together with his exposure of formal religion, excited violent opposition. The minister denounced him, and his own father was scarcely less severe. Having been convicted of heresy, an older brother was appointed to conduct him to prison. Not being watched very closely, and the way lying near the line between Switzerland and France, he made good his escape, and was soon beyond the reach of his unnatural

persecutors. He journeyed along the Rhine until he came to the Palatinate. Here he fell in with the Mennonites, with whom he seems to have had no acquaintance in Switzerland. He married and became the father of several children. Of these, Jacob, the third in order bearing that name, born in 1693, came to America in 1715, as before stated. He located in Conestoga Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Soon afterward he married a Miss Kendig. He was a deacon, as had been his father before him, in the Mennonite Society. He bought a farm and built upon it. He was also a blacksmith, and worked at his trade. His wife was a very industrious woman, and, when necessary, would leave her work, and blow and strike for him. Henry Boehm, speaking from his recollection of her character and life, calls her "an excellent woman." To these parents were born a number of sons and daughters.

Of these, Martin Boehm was the youngest. He was born November 30th, 1725. Little if any of his education, such as it was, was obtained at school. The early Mennonites, though poor, brought with them a few books, and began soon to multiply the number in this country. Persecution had made them at the same time well acquainted with their principles and determinedly



devoted to them. Young Martin, being a son in the family of a well-to-do deacon in the society, would be given at home the rudiments of a German education, and would feel the yet powerful impulse of the Mennonite spirit. The influence of the church would, in its way, be itself an education. Who does not know that nine tenths of all education since the Christian church was founded has sprung, whether in the line of vital religion or not, from the traditions and purposes of the church? Martin Boehm subsequently added to the fund of knowledge that he acquired in the German language the ability to converse intelligibly and to read with some success and profit in the English language. He accumulated a fair stock of good religious books, some of them being in the English language.

He is described as being a short, stout man, with a vigorous constitution, an intellectual countenance, and a fine flowing beard, which gave him, in his later years, a patriarchal appearance.

He was married in 1753 to Eve Steiner, nine years his junior. She was a "noble woman" and was justly loved and esteemed. Her ancestors were from Switzerland. The parents of Martin Boehm spent their last days with him, and from them he inherited the beautiful home farm. The father died in 1780, rejoicing in the truths into

which the ministry of his son Martin was the means of leading him.

The account of Martin Boehm's conversion is so typical, and throws such light on his relations to Mr. Otterbein, that it will be given at some length. He was nominated to the ministry and chosen by the lot, after the Mennonite custom, in 1756. The account of what followed will be given in his own words, as taken down and translated by Mr. Spayth. After speaking of his selection for the ministry and his failure in his public efforts, he said: "This state began deeply to distress me—to be a preacher, and yet have nothing to preach, nor to say, but stammer out a few words, and then be obliged to take my seat in shame and remorse! I had faith in prayer, and prayed more fervently. While thus engaged in praying earnestly for aid to preach, the thought rose in my mind, or as though one spoke to me, saying, 'You pray for grace to teach others the way of salvation, and you have not prayed for your own salvation.' This thought or word did not leave me. *My salvation* followed me wherever I went. I felt constrained to pray for myself; and while praying for myself my mind became alarmed. I felt and saw myself a poor sinner. I was LOST! My agony became great. I was plowing in the field, and knelt down at each

end of the furrow to pray. The word *lost, lost* (*verlohren*), went every round with me. Midway in the field I could go no farther, but sunk behind the plow, crying, 'Lord, save, I am lost!' And again the thought or voice said, 'I am come to seek and to save that which is lost.' In a moment a stream of joy was poured over me. I praised the Lord, and left the field and told my companion what joy I felt.

"As before this I wished the Sabbath far off, now I wished it were to-morrow. Sunday came; the elder brother preached. I rose to tell my experience since my call to the ministry. When speaking of my lost estate and agony of mind, some in the congregation began to weep. This gave me encouragement to speak of our fall and lost condition, and of repentance. The Sabbath following it was the same, and much more. Before I was done I found myself in the midst of the congregation, where some were weeping aloud.

"This caused considerable commotion in our church, as well as among the people generally. It was all new; none of us had heard or seen it before. A new creation appeared to rise up before me, and around me. Now scripture, before mysterious, and like a dead letter to me, was plain of interpretation; was all spirit, all life (*alles geist und leben*).

“Like a dream, old things had passed away, and it seemed as if I had awaked to new life, new thoughts, new faith, new love. I rejoiced and praised God with my whole heart. This joy, this faith, this love I wished to communicate to those around me; but, when speaking thereof, in public or in private, it made different impressions on different persons. Some gave a mournful look; some sighed and wept, and would say, ‘O Martin, we are indeed lost!’

“Yes, man (*der mensch*) is lost! Christ will never find us till we know that we are lost. My wife was the next lost sinner that felt the same joy, the same love.”

Mr. Boehm’s evangelical preaching is to be dated from 1758. Though his preaching was different from that common among the Mennonites, no general opposition was at once excited. He was advanced by the lot to full pastoral standing—in Mennonite language was made a bishop—in 1759. Though he speaks of the sudden bursting forth of a “stream of joy,” it is evident that at least his confidence in his new-found experience, and especially his appreciation of the proper nature of his public ministry, passed through different stages.

Along with the many Germans that about the middle of the eighteenth century crossed the line

from Pennsylvania over the narrow neck of Maryland, into the Shenandoah Valley, then called New Virginia, were numerous Mennonite families. Some of Mr. Boehm's relatives were carried along by this tide. Here the Mennonite families were for the most part without preaching. About this time some of the converts of the famous George Whitefield reached New Virginia, and began to preach a present salvation. With others, some members of the Mennonite families became seriously affected. The Mennonites were in a dilemma, and applied for the presence and advice of some of their own preachers. This was in 1761. Mr. Boehm was told by some that scarcely knew what to make of his zeal at home, that, as he was now so ready to preach, he should go. To this he was not himself disinclined. He had an earnest desire "to find the truth more fully."

A case will illustrate the state of things existing in Virginia. A daughter of a Mr. Keller, weighed down by a sense of her lost estate, was almost on the verge of despair. Her parents knew not what to do.

"At this crisis Boehm arrived. After salutations had passed and refreshments had been taken, Boehm, in conversation with Keller, inquired how matters stood in religion. Keller replied, 'Most of us are doing well; but some new doctrine has

of late been preached by men hereabout, which has caused some disturbance among us.'

" 'And what do those men preach?'

" 'What they preach is rather more than I can tell you, but it is different from what we have ever heard. Our daughter, about two months since, was at their meeting, and has not been like herself since.'

" 'And for two months she has been at no preaching?'

" 'No, we could not think of letting her go, and have wished she had never heard those people; and, as we have written you, there are others of our people just like her, melancholy and dejected, and all we can get them to say is, "we are lost (*verlohren*), we have no true religion;" and for this reason we have sent for you, believing that they would be advised by our own preachers, and dismiss their gloomy thoughts.'

" 'And where is that daughter of yours?'

" 'Why,' answered the mother, 'there you see she is, and has not spoken a word to any of us to-day.'

" Boehm now moved his chair to her side and sought to draw from herself the state and exercises of her mind. She listened to him for some time in silence, breathing at intervals a deep sigh. Soon the fountain of her tears was opened again,

and she began to weep aloud, and said, 'Is it possible that you, a stranger, know what I have felt and suffered for weeks, and you believe that I am a sinner, that I am lost?'

"'Yes, I know this, my daughter, but I know Jesus came to seek and save that which is lost; and he is come to find you, and to save you to-night yet. Do you believe in Jesus?'

"'Yes, I believe Jesus Christ lives; but have I not offended him? Will he not come and judge the world and me? Oh, that Jesus would but save me!'

"'Come,' said Boehm, 'we will kneel down and pray.' They knelt down. The agony of Miss Keller was great. She cried, 'Lord, save, or I perish!'

"'Yes,' said Boehm, 'hold to that; he will save and that speedily;' and so it was. She was blessed and all her sorrow was gone — dissolved in joy.'

"Seeing this, her mother cried out, 'Martin, Martin! what have you done? Why did you come? What will become of us now?'

"'Yes,' replied her husband, 'what will become of us? We, too, are lost!'

"That night was a night of mourning, and a night of joy for that house, for the morning light found them all rejoicing in the love of God." \*

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\* Spayth.

Not only was Mr. Boehm a helper in the Lord's work in Virginia, but he himself was greatly helped by what he heard and beheld. He found many souls that "could give a rational and scriptural account of their experience and acceptance with God."

On his return to Pennsylvania, the old forms and bounds could not confine his action and efforts. His heart was greatly enlarged, and he was burdened with a desire to extend the knowledge of an immediate salvation. He now began to hold meetings on week-days as well as on Sabbath.

One of the important results of his trip to Virginia was the coming, at intervals, of the "Virginia preachers," as these lay evangelists of Virginia were called, into Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The houses are still pointed out at which, when on their way, they stopped. In Virginia they were called "New Lights." In a distinct form, their work did not abide. The preachers were sometimes spoken of as "English preachers," though some of them doubtless preached in the German. In Lancaster County they co-operated with Mr. Boehm in holding great meetings (*grosse Versammlungen*). Great meetings did not belong to the economy of any single body of Christians. The name had been



applied to meetings held in 1724, in which Dunkers were the most prominent, and in 1742, in which the Moravians were the most prominent. With these meetings, the meetings held by Mr. Boehm seem to have had no connection, except that arising from the general religious condition of the people. The name, however, soon came to have a specific application. At the time of the meeting at Isaac Long's barn, a Virginia preacher was present; and as all could not be accommodated in the barn, he preached, as already narrated, to an overflow meeting in the orchard. It is related that a shower of rain came on during the meeting, and that this preacher was the last to leave the ground.

Before the time of this noted meeting, Mr. Boehm had made numerous converts among the Mennonites. Among these were the three brothers, Isaac, John, and Benjamin Long. Isaac was warm-hearted and very demonstrative. He was frequently present at meetings held at a distance from his home. John Long was especially active in securing the presence of the "Virginia preachers." All of the Longs were prosperous farmers.

At the great meeting held at Isaac Long's, people were present from York and Lebanon counties, as well as from Lancaster County. Lutherans,

German Reformed, Mennonites, and others were present. The movement was given, at this time, a new impulse, and assumed, for the first, its more proper and permanent character. Of course, the antecedent elements represented by Mr. Otterbein are not made so prominent in this chapter as those on the Mennonite side. At the great meeting referred to the different elements were measurably consolidated and made to work together. The feature deserving of the most abiding remembrance in connection with this meeting is that Otterbein, Boehm, and the Virginia preacher present are said to have formed a union, with some simple but definite conditions as its basis. One of these conditions was liberty in the practical elements of baptism. The historic mode of baptism with the Mennonites was by pouring, and only adults were recognized as proper subjects. The Reformed baptized by sprinkling, and insisted on infant baptism. There is some likelihood that the "Virginia preachers" baptized by immersion.

Lancaster County is famous for the origin of new religious movements. The Evangelical Association, the River Brethren, and other bodies here had their origin. Pennsylvania, in early times, was in a state of moral ferment, and the country swarmed with a diversity of "sects." It

is not strange that a new movement should be opposed, but, in the condition of things, nothing could have been worse than indiscriminate opposition. In more than one case, years of evangelical life and moderation were necessary to change a judgment that had been formed in unreasoning bigotry and spiritual blindness.

The movement under consideration was in no way designed to lead to the formation of a new denomination. The leaders did not know what exception would be taken to their course, until opposition revealed its character and extent. In different places, especially in Mennonite communities, independent conversions took place. Many instances of this independent impulse toward an inward spiritual life could be given, but the cases of Mr. Otterbein in the Reformed Church, and of Mr. Boehm among the Mennonites, are for the present sufficient for illustration. The union formed, with the results appearing here and there, became more and more offensive to the Mennonites; and to those that especially regarded themselves as "church" people the offense was all the greater.

After the Isaac Long meeting, Mr. Boehm spent more and more of his time in preaching. He early appears as preaching regularly at three special places. He preached at Pequea (to the

“Pequea brethren” of his own neighborhood), at Landis Valley (to the “Conestoga brethren” in the Long neighborhood), and at Donegal (to the “River brethren” on the Susquehanna). For the meetings at his own place he fitted up the old house that had been built and occupied by his father. The congregations were all principally made up of Mennonites.

The congregation on the Susquehanna proved too conservative for Mr. Boehm’s rapidly advancing apprehensions and methods. His enlarged association with others whose history was so different from that of the Mennonites created difficulties. There were also objections to his liberal views and practice as to baptism. The congregation was made up of converted people; but from some diversity in the original elements of the congregation, as well as from other causes, peculiarities were developed, and soon thereupon an aversion to change. While there was no ill feeling and no formal opposition, it was yet signified to Mr. Boehm that “he was too far in advance” for his services to be acceptable. This congregation some time afterward, about 1776, became the mother congregation for the denomination known as River Brethren. They seem to have no tradition of the fact here given, and they sometimes give themselves a Dunker

rather than a Mennonite origin. The reason is doubtless their resemblance, in some things, to the Dunkers.

The religious condition of the Mennonites at this time was at a very low point. Menno and his early followers were evangelical in their experience as well as blameless in their lives; and even many of his later followers continued to possess a high degree of moral earnestness. But Menno's own views of the Christian life were after the portraiture of the Epistle of James, and did not bring into explicit prominence the doctrine of justification by faith. While this doctrine was doubtless implied by him, as it certainly was by James, it lost among the later Mennonites even this implied place. The Mennonites, though becoming generally less strict in discipline and life, still held with relative tenacity to the forms prescribed by their founder. These forms, though largely profitless and hindering in religion, yet conserved among them, for the most part, a respectable morality; though in numerous individual cases, the transforming power of religion being wanting, gross offenses were not repressed from the outer life. Among the Mennonites themselves have arisen many accusers, but as many of their accusations relate to outer customs they need not be considered here. It has been stated

that John Herr, who after 1800 sought to introduce reforms among the Mennonites, received his impulse from Martin Boehm. His work, however, only led into a deeper bondage to form, and a more dwarfing exclusiveness. The rich opportunities that the New World offered to the long-oppressed Mennonites, while able, along with their wanton surroundings, to turn them for a time yet more from the spirit of Menno, could not completely destroy the foundation for better things. The barrenness began to be felt, and the dearth raised its cry unto Heaven.

Neither Martin Boehm nor any others that were laboring along with him, as has already been said, desired to separate from the church or churches to which they belonged; nor were they lacking in care and prudence to prevent any needless offense. Separation, in the case of Martin Boehm, however, was brought about by the determination on the part of his Mennonite brethren to remain where they were, and to sever from themselves by excommunication any that might turn individuals of their number into another way. If it had been a resolution to cast out a mere human troubler, we could not but applaud it; but if it was God's time to awaken the people, and his purpose to use Martin Boehm as an instrument, then the complaints of the Mennon-

ites against him were altogether misdirected. If the harmony and tranquillity of the Mennonites were sorely disturbed, they were responsible. Even one poor instrument on the side of God's providence would determine a case of right and duty against any amount of unwillingness and opposition. Wrongs and resistance to duty have no chartered rights. Surely God called and the great body of Mennonites were not ready. They cast out Martin Boehm, but did not stop the work. The idea of separation, which to "church" people was still below the horizon, was not a novelty to the Mennonites. They themselves were separatists. If others did not suit them, or if they did not suit others—then separation. But the idea, though making itself apparent in the history of the Mennonites, did not even with them, as it does with us, take its place upon the prow of men's thoughts.

A communication sent out by the Mennonite bishops, ministers, and deacons of Lancaster County and adjacent parts, to make known to the membership at large the grounds for the expulsion of Martin Boehm, by a strange fortune, has been preserved. Its entire contents may be found in an English form, covering fourteen fair-sized pages, in a book entitled "The Mennonite Church and her Accusers," by Rev. John F.

**Funk.** In the paper there are marks of a long struggle, with the usual amount of irritation and misunderstanding. Mr. Boehm sought once and again to satisfy his brethren, and they, in turn, waited and demanded that he desist from the course on which he had entered. Outside of the fact that the interests of vital, soul-saving Christianity were in the balance, the document speaks well for the character of the Mennonite Church. If, in some respects, the paper makes an unfavorable showing for the accused, it must be remembered that it is a representation proceeding from but one side, and drawn up after years of harassing efforts to silence or "reform."

After a few introductory paragraphs, the paper proceeds as follows: "Now, however, it is a well-known fact that between us and Martin Boehm there is, in many points, a difference of views, and we have, at times, for several years already, labored to become more of one mind and to understand each other better, that we might be found faithful laborers in the church of Christ; which, however, has not been accomplished, and the matter has from time to time become worse. For the reason, however, that the brotherhood do not possess as good a knowledge of the cause and origin of this disagreement between us, which consists of many things both in words and deeds,



as we do (although many are not entirely unacquainted with it), we have concluded to write them and thus explain the matter. In the first place, in that in which we believe that he [Boehm] erred in the doctrine of Christ, he had a great deal to do with forming a union and associating with men (professors) who allow themselves to walk on the broad way, preaching warfare and the swearing of oaths, both of which are in direct opposition to the truths of the gospel and the teachings of Christ."

It is also stated that "he maintained that Satan was a benefit to man," and declared that "faith cometh from unbelief, life from death, and light out of darkness." These latter charges seem to have grown out of the phraseology that Boehm became familiar with, through his association with the Whitefield preachers from Virginia. His subsequent course shows that his predestinarian views did not extend beyond his uninstructed and unfortunate phraseology.

It is also stated that he said that "the Scriptures might be burned," and that the Mennonite ministers laid too much "stress upon the ordinances." Boehm disclaimed all disrespect for the ordinances; and in reference to the burning of the Scriptures, it is easy to infer what he actually meant.

On a sheet accompanying the old manuscript it was stated, as quoted in substance in the book referred to, that "the church could no longer retain Boehm and his followers that had been members of the church, as brethren, and that they should be excluded from the communion and counsels of the brotherhood."

The real causes of Mr. Boehm's expulsion were the part that he had in promoting revivals, and his association with those that belonged to other churches. The clashing with the "established order of the church," though put in the foreground by the paper, was only an incident, yet seemingly a necessary one. The fact that some that were brought into the "union" used the English language was also made a ground of complaint. Any seeming excess or imprudence on Boehm's part could have been but a transient incident. The reaction from a formal and lifeless church is almost sure to produce an aversion to even salutary forms, and for this the church itself has its share of responsibility. But Mr. Boehm's course was marked with moderation and the absence of wild and ungoverned tendencies. When required to desist from his course, "he said he could not, but if it could be shown him he had done wrong, he would recall." When he was expelled, he sung —

“ O du grosser Siegesfuerst,  
Wie hast du doch so sehr geduerst  
Nach der Menschen Heil und Leben,  
Der Du Dich  
Auch fuer mich  
In den Tod gegeben.”

The following gives the sense of the above—

“ O thou triumphant King,  
How didst thou long to bring  
To man the hope of life and heaven ;  
Thyself to death, for even me,  
Lord, thou hast given.”

Though Mr. Boehm's followers were in a general way also excommunicated, there was no complete separation at the time. Shortly after his expulsion, and before 1780, we find him preaching regularly, by his own appointing, at Rohrer's on Mill Creek, at Stoner's, at his own place, and at another place not named. Nor was his preaching confined to these places. His range of preaching soon became greatly extended. After his son Jacob grew up, he was released from the care of the farm, and gave himself up to the work of traveling and preaching.

After Mr. Otterbein removed from York, and during the first part of the Revolutionary War, the direct oversight of that part of the revival-movement belonging to the state of Pennsylvania was mostly left to him.

The next associate of Mr. Otterbein to be men-

tioned is George Adam Geeting. He was born February 6th, 1741, at Nieder Schelden, in Nassau-Siegen, at present a part of the province of Hesse-Nassau, Prussia. His birthplace was thus quite near to that of Mr. Otterbein. He was the youngest child in his father's family. He was raised in the Reformed Church. He received a fair education, acquiring some knowledge of the Latin along with his knowledge of the German. When he grew up he labored as a miner. In his eighteenth year he came to this country. As, owing to the hostilities between France and England, immigration, as said by a leading authority, was "entirely suspended" between 1756 and 1761, he could have come with no company of immigrants. He doubtless landed at Baltimore, and thence soon proceeded to the community on the Antietam, in Washington County, Maryland, until 1776 a part of Frederick County. Here he made his home for the remainder of his life.

In the Antietam community he was engaged in the winter-time in teaching school, and in the summer-time in quarrying stone and digging wells. It is probable that the school-house at Antietam, so long standing by the meeting-house afterward erected, and which gave to the meeting-house the name of the "so-called school-house," was erected about this time. Both were built

upon the land owned by the grandfather of Elias Snively (Schnebley), the present holder. It is likely that it was in this school-house that the young German school-master taught.

The community had frequently been visited by the Reformed ministers from Frederick. Mr. Steiner likely preached at this place. Mr. Otterbein on going to Frederick in 1760 preached also at Antietam; and here, probably about the time that his first visits were made, he had in his audience young Geeting. The latter was soon converted, and at once made himself useful in the religious work of the community. As the years passed, Mr. Otterbein came to find in this German convert what he found in no other person with whom his long life and great labors brought him in contact. Geeting was to him a real Timothy. After Mr. Otterbein moved to York, his visits to Antietam were less frequent, but yet he did not cease to make occasional visits. His successors at Frederick do not seem to have visited the place. As there were considerable intervals without preaching, Mr. Geeting was called on, as he was the school-teacher, to read sermons; and this he did with evident impression upon the people. When Mr. Otterbein became acquainted with the good results of Mr. Geeting's attempts to supply the lack of ministerial service, he directed that

some one of his brethren, on the next Sabbath when there should be an appointment for him to read, should take the book from before him, and leave him to his own extemporaneous utterance. Mr. Jacob Hess accordingly did this. After a moment's hesitation Mr. Geeting proceeded, and gave a very impressive exhortation and address. This was about 1772. The manner in which he subsequently acted as a leader at Antietam will be given further along.

On Whitsuntide, 1783, he was ordained, in the Antietam church, by Mr. Otterbein and Rev. Wm. Hendel. This ordination does not seem to have been formal, as it was expected that in 1786 Mr. Geeting would apply to the Reformed cœtus, of which he had previously become a member, for ordination. It is not known whether the cœtus recognized the earlier ordination, or whether it granted a subsequent formal ordination. He certainly came to be recognized as properly ordained.

Mr. Geeting was a man of good physical constitution, and capable of great endurance. He became possessed of a good farm, and everything about him was indicative of good condition. The good horses that he kept are even yet spoken of. He was scrupulously neat in dress, though he never wore the customary clerical suit.

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He was possessed of superior gifts. His sympathies were ready and abundant. His understanding of occasions, and faculty of adaptation, were much beyond the usual. He had a voice combining sweetness and power. His method and continued attention to books made him capable of great and increasing usefulness. In his preaching he was earnest, yet deliberate. His addresses to the conscience and feelings were always impressive, and sometimes strikingly moving. As he was in the first place, and in the strictest sense, a product of the revival-movement, there were combined in him its strictest moral and logical characteristics. Otterbein and Boehm, though authors in the movement, were themselves formed by earlier and different influences. The distinctive character of Mr. Geeting was apparent in all of his course, from first to last.

None of those that were associated with him traveled and labored more abundantly than he. In very important respects he exerted a decided influence upon Mr. Otterbein; and on some subjects, in regard to which Mr. Otterbein has given us no expression, Mr. Geeting is the exponent of his thoughts. No field of labor was more enjoyable to Mr. Otterbein than that that awaited him at the Antietam, and in no counsels or associations did he more confide or find truer pleasure

than in those that he enjoyed at George A. Geeting's. We shall often meet, in these pages, this younger associate.

The meeting-house already referred to, doubtless the first built by the co-laborers and followers of Mr. Otterbein, was built about 1780, near Mr. Geeting's place. The materials were drawn together and fashioned into a church by the zeal and good-will of the community. The ground on which the church stood was never deeded. The house was a humble log structure, but it became a center of wide and manifold labors. It was in later times frequently called the Geeting Meeting-house. When the first informal society formed at Antietam as the result of the revival-movement was organized, George Adam Geeting, Samuel Baker, Henry Smith, and soon afterward Jacob Hess, with their families, constituted the members. This must have been before 1774—how long before can not be known. Over the society thus formed Mr. Geeting might be called the pastor, though his labors were largely of an itinerant character.

Among those whose awakening, and, in some cases, beginning labors belonged to the period before 1774, were Frederick Schaffer, who was converted during Mr. Otterbein's labors at Lancaster, Martin Crider, the next oldest preacher in


the revival-movement after Otterbein and Boehm, and Adam Lehman, then living near the north line of Frederick County. There were also others whose first labors belonged to this period, and others still that soon entered the vineyard.

*With this notice of some of his early co-laborers, let us turn to the new field on which Mr. Otterbein was entering at Baltimore.*

## CHAPTER VIII.

### CALL TO BALTIMORE.

Mr. Otterbein's Position — The Old Congregation — Troubles — Mr. Schwope — The New Congregation — Efforts to Bring it Back — Independence of the Congregation — Asbury's Statement — Hildt's Testimony — The Property of the Congregation — Trial of 1840 — Extract from Griffith's Annals — Not Represented by Elders — Importance of Reaching the Truth.

AY 4th, 1774, Mr. Otterbein assumed charge of a new and independent congregation in the city of Baltimore, Maryland. The congregation was the result of a separation from the original German Reformed church. The step was a very important one to Mr. Otterbein. He was now forty-eight years of age, and in the prime of his matured powers. He had been twenty-two years in America. These years were full of history to him. His belief in a spiritual church, his belief in the use of extraordinary means for bringing souls to Christ, and his part in introducing social meetings had not made his way more smooth. He was as far from rashness as he was from self-seeking. It was not from frowardness that he broke away

from the trammels that had hitherto embarrassed his ministry, and sought *thenceforth to raise up*, from the wilds of sin and the world, a spiritual people. That there were not converted people in the old churches is by no means asserted. It was a fact, however, that the notions and practice of the multitude of church-members were such as to almost completely neutralize all effort for the promotion of practical and personal religion.

Baltimore, in 1774, contained about six thousand inhabitants. The German population, though less in proportion than in many places, was yet considerable, and while largely due to direct immigration from Europe, was also the result, to no inconsiderable extent, of immigration from Pennsylvania, and from other parts of Maryland.

The beginning of the Reformed church in Baltimore dates back to 1750. Yet there was no church-building before about 1757, and no regular pastor before about 1760. Both the Reformed and the Lutheran churches were for a considerable time quite weak, and worshiped together in the same house. The first regular pastor of the Reformed church was Rev. John Christian Faber, whose ministrations were formal and languid, and whose life was offensive. Mr. Otterbein had frequently visited the Baltimore congregation while he was yet at Lancaster, and before the

congregation had a regular pastor. A considerable part of the congregation had but little to do with Mr. Faber from the first. As time passed, many that had been converted in other places under Mr. Otterbein's labors moved into Baltimore.

In the year 1770 complaints were made against Mr. Faber, and there was much dissension in the congregation. Mr. Faber, on his part, made complaints against his opponents, and also against Rev. Benedict Schwope, who was at the time preaching near Baltimore. Mr. Faber and Mr. Schwope submitted their differences to the cœtus, and a committee appointed to investigate the case vindicated the character and conduct of Mr. Schwope. At this time Mr. Schwope had the sympathy of the cœtus. In the early part of 1771 the crisis came. The evangelical party, not succeeding in securing the removal of Mr. Faber, withdrew and elected Mr. Schwope for their pastor.

Although Mr. Schwope is spoken of by Dr. Harbaugh — on the authority of Dr. Elias Heiner — as a young man recently arrived from Germany, he was at this time forty years of age. As early as 1763 he was an elder in the Reformed congregation at Pipe Creek, and as early as 1754 his name appears in the church-list at York. If

it is correct to identify him with the Benedict Schwope at York, he possibly had the advantage of the first part of Mr. Otterbein's ministry at York. At all events, in 1774, he must have been already for a number of years acquainted with Mr. Otterbein.

In 1771 Mr. Schwope's party bought several lots on Howard's Hill, and so vested their right in the same as to hold the property at their own will. By October they had erected a small meeting-house. In a position to save their independence, no difference what course the opposing party might take, and yet desirous of a union, if thereby the whole united congregation could be brought under an evangelical minister, they presented their case before the cœtus.

The cœtus made earnest efforts to unite the congregations, but to no purpose. At the session of 1771 it was proposed that both Faber and Schwope should withdraw, and that the two parties should unite and agree upon a minister. The plan failed, because, according to one version, Mr. Schwope's people would not allow him to withdraw, or because, according to another version—Mr. Otterbein's—the old party, after the retirement of Mr. Faber, hastily chose as their minister, without consulting the other party, Rev. W. Wallauer, a man in every respect more objec-

tionable than Mr. Faber. In the cœtus of 1772 no progress was made. At this session Mr. Otterbein was placed upon a committee of supply for the Baltimore charge, but as Mr. Wallauer continued to hold his place, it is evident that Mr. Otterbein did not visit Baltimore unless, perhaps, to preach occasionally for the new congregation. In 1773, Mr. Schwope, from some cause, was anxious to withdraw, and his congregation extended a call to Mr. Otterbein; but he declined in consequence of the discouraging condition of the congregation. As solicitations continued to be sent to him, he expressed himself as willing to accept, provided the cœtus would consent. The cœtus at its meeting in 1773 did not favor his acceptance, whereupon both parties extended a call to Dr. Hendel. In case Dr. Hendel should not accept, the united congregations were given the privilege of choosing any other member of the cœtus as pastor. The old party, however, refused to indorse the action of their delegates in calling Dr. Hendel. The condition of things was not improving.

The following spring Mr. Otterbein was again called by the new congregation, and, notwithstanding the action of the cœtus, he accepted. He was censured by the cœtus, though informally. This must have been at the session in the fall of 1774.



At the same session Faber was received into the cœtus. In 1775 the cœtus voted to receive the congregation; and following out the same line, the cœtus in 1784 voted to recognize both congregations as long as they should "remain faithful to the doctrine and customs of the Reformed Church." In all of these evidences of struggles in the Baltimore congregations, and in the cœtus, we must not suppose that there is adequately represented the character of the struggle that an earnest minority had to maintain against an unevangelical majority. Nor is it to be understood that we are left to the imperfect testimony already given to form our judgment as to the character, in an ecclesiastical view, of the new congregation.

Some of the points that show that the Baltimore congregation was confirmed in its independent position from a time shortly before Mr. Otterbein assumed charge of it will now be given.

The name of the congregation was "The German Evangelical Reformed Church," or "The Evangelical Reformed Church," the latter being the form in which the name first appeared. It will be found by giving a thought to the ecclesiastical history of America that ecclesiastical titles may be almost if not quite the same without identifying religious bodies. In some cases the only difference is in the emphasis that is given to the little article *the*. The

great effort is to emphasize fidelity to a starting-principle, from which the new bodies believe there has been more or less departure. Dr. Theodore Appel, of the Reformed Church, gives the following statement as to the use of the term evangelical: "The German Reformed Church, as closely allied to the Lutheran Church, and enjoying in common with it much of the fervor, depth, geniality, and freedom of German Christianity, still retains the epithet evangelical in the fatherland; whereas in other Reformed churches its original distinctive use has in a great measure been forgotten. In its current use at present in this country it is intended to express an antagonism to prelacy and high-churchism." The term evangelical has not formed a part of the title of the German Reformed Church in this country; and the cases in which it has been applied to local congregations—as being more recent, or the result of the association of congregations with the Lutherans, or as presenting an epithet without emphasis—have no force or bearing in the present case. Even the number of these irrelevant cases is the very fewest. No one will deny that the term evangelical, as forming a part of the name of the Baltimore church, was expressive of the most decided antithesis. The name of the church, while in itself not conclusive as to the independ-

ence of the church, forms a significant starting-point for our inquiries, and in connection with other things becomes itself an evidence.

In 1772 Mr. Schwope became acquainted with Mr. Asbury. February 3d, 1774, Mr. Asbury wrote a letter to Mr. Otterbein, whom he had not at that time met, but whom he already knew through Mr. Schwope, the object of the letter being to prevail upon Mr. Otterbein to settle in Baltimore. Two days afterward, after a conversation with Mr. Schwope, Mr. Asbury made the following entry in his journal: "On Saturday Mr. S. came to consult me in respect to Mr. O.'s coming to this town. We agreed to promote his settling here, and laid a plan nearly similar to ours—to wit, that gifted persons amongst them who may, at any time, be moved by the Holy Ghost to speak for God, should be encouraged, and if the synod would not agree, they were still to persevere in the line of duty." Mr. Asbury's observation is, of course, silent as to Mr. Otterbein's earlier labors, upon which he had entered without "plan." It likewise fails to indicate fully the situation of things three months later. Mr. Schwope was even in advance of Mr. Asbury as to some points, as is indicated by the fact that in 1772 he believed that the Methodist preachers should have conceded to them the privilege of

administering the ordinances, and the complete functions of ministers, while Mr. Asbury, who regarded himself as but a layman, steadily maintained the opposite.

A direct testimony is borne by Mr. John Hildt, who was a member of Mr. Otterbein's vestry as early as 1809, and who for a number of years before Mr. Otterbein's death was one of his nearest and most trusted friends.\* He says in a letter, a part of which was published in the *Religious Telescope* of July 28th, 1858, that Mr. Otterbein was called "provided he would consent to be, or become, independent of the synod of the German Reformed Church," and that when Mr. Otterbein was apprised of the condition insisted on by the congregation, "he demanded of them three days' time for consideration, at the expiration of which time he acceded." Mr. Hildt added, "Being no longer trammelled with the rules and discipline of the German Reformed Church, he formed, with the consent of his brethren, a new set of rules for the membership of his new and independent church." The independence spoken of

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\* Even down to the close of his life, Mr. Hildt could not speak of Mr. Otterbein without a rush of tears. He was a man of good education and strong, responsible character. He was converted under an Easter sermon preached by Mr. Otterbein; and so much was he esteemed by him that Mr. Otterbein once said to him, "I want you to hold yourself for my place." In 1817 he began to preach, and was long a successful minister among the United Brethren.

was, of course, even as indicated in the last remark of Mr. Hildt, in regard to the position of the congregation, rather than in regard to Mr. Otterbein personally.

The manner of deeding and holding the lots on Howard's Hill—the historic site of the church-houses of the congregation—is also an evidence. This ground was deeded August 7th, 1771, by Cornelius Howard to Conrad Smith, John Stover, and Valentine Larsh, the consideration being ninety pounds, Maryland currency (two hundred and forty dollars and thirty cents). The deed was made to these men, not in trust, but personally, which in itself and for those times might not be thought to signify much. It was the custom then, however, to name the grantees of church-property as "trustees," or to specify "in trust," except in cases in which the parties knew or cared little in regard to the form of holding church-property. The present case was not such an exception, as many things indicate. The deed for the lot conveyed to the Reformed church in Frederick, in 1764, was made to the "elders in the Reformed church and their successors forever." Let us notice further the manner in which the Baltimore property was held. John Stover, whose will was probated October 26th, 1774, bequeathed his title in the lots to George Dagon. Conrad

Smith, whose will was probated June 9th, 1777, bequeathed his title in the lots to Rev. Wm. Otterbein. Valentine Larsh, whose will was probated January 30th, 1781, bequeathed his title in the lots to his son Abraham Larsh. Thus in ten years, as far as form was concerned, the property entirely changed hands. July 2d, 1786, these second holders deeded their respective interests in said property to George Devilbiss. In 1792 George Devilbiss deeded the property to William Otterbein, and the latter by will bequeathed the same to Peter Hoffman and Wm. Baker, who should "take all legal measures to vest the said property in the elders, trustees, and members of the German Evangelical Reformed Church." If this manner of holding the property, for a period of forty years, means anything, it means, if not that a congregation to be preserved absolutely independent was contemplated at the start, at least that the congregation was determined, in the absence of any settled line of procedure, to keep its future, under Providence, within its own power. This necessarily meant a basis of independence at the first. By keeping the property in the hands of the most trusted, they secured their object. As early as 1774 a confirmed attitude of independence was reached. But the character of the congregation within itself was, to a considerable extent, a subsequent development.

The charter obtained in 1798, under which the property was finally and permanently held, states that all property should be "absolutely and unconditionally" vested in the elders, trustees, and members of the German Evangelical Reformed Church.

In 1840, when a few disaffected members, strongly abetted by persons in the Reformed Church, sought to wrest the property from its proper holders and carry it over to the Reformed Church, the congregation renewed the statement of its originally independent character. In the trial that followed the court gave a summary judgment, "in strong and decisive terms," in favor of the congregation. This judgment was based upon all the legal papers pertaining to the congregation, and upon the history of the congregation; and it ought, from every point of view, to be regarded as decisive. It was not only made clear that the congregation was independent in its relations, but that it was not Reformed in character. Yet a second German Reformed church, erected in 1843, has been styled the Third German Reformed Church.

The case might be rested here, but a few points yet remain to be stated. The following incidental testimony of Griffith, coming as it does from a disinterested source, and from an early period,

must be conceded to have some force: "Several members of the German or Dutch Presbyterian society, attached to the Rev. Wm. Otterbein, form a separate religious society which they distinguish by the name of the German Evangelical Reformed Church, and they purchased a lot, where their present church is on Conway Street, and worship in a small house there."\* In all of his references, Griffith gives to the Reformed Church the name given above, and to Mr. Otterbein's congregation its proper designation.

Further evidence may be found in the set of articles given in the church-book of the congregation, and in the charter of the congregation, both of which documents will be found in a subsequent chapter.

A concluding testimony, one that seems to make all others superfluous, is the fact that no elders from Mr. Otterbein's church, in the almost forty years of his connection with it, were ever in attendance at the sessions of the cœtus. The lists and papers belonging to this period in the history of the Baltimore church, in connection with the minutes of the cœtus that are extant, seem to assure this fact beyond dispute. The ministers serving churches under the cœtus were instructed always to bring an elder or elders with them.

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\* Page 63 of Griffith's *Annals of Baltimore*, published in 1822.




It has been exceedingly disagreeable to be required to go to such length in giving the character of the Baltimore congregation, but the better feelings that all concerned desire will be impossible until the real facts in this case are allowed to go to history.

The determination of the character of the congregation does not declare what Mr. Otterbein's personal relations to the German Reformed Church, at that time, were. By taking charge of the Baltimore congregation he did not necessarily cast off his relation to the cœtus. What his relations finally became will be indicated in the proper place.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ESTABLISHMENT AND PROGRESS OF THE BALTIMORE CONGREGATION.

Churches Built—The Congregation—Rules of Discipline—  
Later History.

T has been said that under Mr. Otterbein's faithful labors the Baltimore congregation successively outgrew and was successively able to replace two church-buildings. This statement is, however, at fault. The first building, erected by Mr. Schwope in 1771, was doubtless left for Mr. Otterbein to complete, and put in proper order.

In 1785, eleven years after Mr. Otterbein went to Baltimore, the church now standing, and the only one erected during his pastorate, was built. The front of the church, now shut in by buildings, at first faced a street, then known as Walnut Street, running diagonally and approaching somewhat nearer to the church than does the north and south street now lying in that direction. The church-building was constructed of brick, and exclusive of the steeple, which was subsequently added, was sixty-five feet in length. The

breadth was forty-eight feet. There was, as seen in many churches erected in that day, an upper course of windows, designed to admit light to the gallery, which extended all around the interior of the building, except the end at which the pulpit stood. The building was of the most substantial kind, and after the lapse of ninety-nine years still answers well its purpose. At the same time when the church was built, a parsonage, a cottage of four rooms, was also built. The entire cost of the church and parsonage was five thousand dollars, a sum representing a larger value then than now. This was a large sum for the congregation to raise, especially as some of its members had before borne a part in the erection of other church-buildings. Valentine Larsh, and likely also Conrad Smith, whose names are given in connection with the purchase of the lots on Howard's Hill, had served on the building committee in the erecting of the church-building that was held by Mr. Faber's party. They certainly did not leave the congregation whose house they had helped to build to escape burdens.

If it had not been for Mr. Otterbein's personal contributions, the congregation could not have built so substantially. When the church and parsonage were finished, there was a "balance due Father Otterbein" of over one thousand five

hundred dollars. In reference to this debt Mr. Otterbein wrote in the church-book in 1788, "The above debt is partly paid [one third of it], the balance made a present to the congregation." Then followed his name. He is said to have contributed in all toward the buildings, two thousand one hundred and thirty-six dollars. This money, apparently all that he had at the time, and perhaps all that he ever had beyond his living, was mostly received from his wife's father and brother. How fully the people were in accord with him, and how fully he confided in them, appear from his casting his all among them.

Mr. Otterbein had not, from the first, found the most encouragement and success in his work. He received from Mr. Schwope, not a church, but the unorganized elements of a congregation. With 1774 the real history of the church began. In consequence of the discouragements from the Revolutionary War, and the disturbed condition of the country in general, he, in 1779, made up his mind to return to Europe, and there remain for a time; but the dangers of the voyage influenced him to give up the purpose.\* As scarcely any Germans were coming to this country, and as those that were here were seeking homes away from the cities, the prospect of usefulness in Bal-

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\* Pilgerreise, p. 320.

timore was growing weaker rather than stronger. At the close of the war the prospect became much better, and the numbers of the congregation began to increase.

The Reformed cœtus, since the withdrawal of the new congregation in 1771, had been seeking to bring about a union. The resolution against Mr. Otterbein's taking charge of the congregation, and the "informal censure" on his accepting the call tendered him, were due to the fear that he would not or could not bring about a union. The resolution passed in 1775 whereby the cœtus offered to receive the new congregation has been referred to. In 1784 the cœtus gave up its effort in this direction, as is indicated by the following resolution: "*Resolved*, That inasmuch as reunion is not to be expected [in Baltimore] both congregations be retained and recognized as congregations connected with cœtus, so long as they remain faithful to the doctrine and customs of the Reformed Church." This change in the attitude of the cœtus may have pleased Mr. Otterbein, though it is certain that he had no anxiety for a change in the relations of his congregation; and it is certainly the case that after 1774 the independence already spoken of was held to be a settled feature of the congregation.

The rules of discipline adopted by the Baltimore

congregation, along with some prefatory remarks, will now be given entire. As these rules proceeded from the pen of Mr. Otterbein, no one will complain of the space taken up. The following are the rules as adopted in 1785, and recorded at that time in the church-book, the prefatory remarks being likewise included:

William Otterbein came to Baltimore, May 4th, 1774, and commenced his ministerial work. Without delay, and by the help of God, he began to organize a church, and, as far as it was possible for him, to bring it within the letter and spirit of the gospel. Such disciplinary church-rules as were needful were therefore, from time to time, adopted, made known, and the importance of keeping them earnestly enjoined. But the afflicting and long-continued war, and the dispersion, on account of the same, of many of its members into the interior of the country, prevented these rules from being written in a book for their preservation.

But through and by the goodness of God peace and quietness being restored, and with the gathering together of former members, and with a considerable addition of new members, the church finds itself, at this time, considerably increased. Therefore it is unanimously concluded and ordained, by the whole church, to bring the constitution and ordinances of this church into the following form, which we hold as agreeing with the word of God; and for

their permanency and perpetual observance, herewith record and preserve.

1. By the undersigned preacher and members that now constitute this church, it is hereby ordained and resolved, that this church, which has been brought together in Baltimore by the ministration of our present preacher, W. Otterbein, in the future, consist of a preacher, three elders, and three trustees, an almoner, and church-members; and these together shall pass under and by the name—The Evangelical Reformed Church.

2. No one, whoever he may be, can be preacher or member of this church whose walk is unchristian and offensive, or who lives in some open sin. (I. Tim. iii. 1-3; I. Cor. v. 11-13.)

3. Each church-member must attend faithfully the public worship on the Sabbath day, and at all other times.

4. This church shall yearly solemnly keep two days of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, which shall be designated by the preacher—one in the spring, the other in the autumn of the year.

5. The members of this church, impressed with the necessity of a constant religious exercise, of suffering the word of God richly and daily to dwell in them,—(Col. iii. 16; Heb. iii. 13;—x. 24, 25),—resolve that each sex shall hold meetings apart, once a week, for which the most suitable day, hour, and place shall be chosen, for the males as well as the females—for the first, an hour in the

evening, and for the last an hour in the day-time, are considered the most suitable. In the absence of the preacher, an elder or trustee shall lead such meetings.

The rules of these special meetings are these:

(a.) No one can be received into them who is not resolved to flee the wrath to come, and, by faith and repentance, to seek his salvation in Christ, and who is not resolved willingly to obey the disciplinary rules which are now observed by this church for good order and advance in godliness, as well as such as in the future may be added by the preacher and church vestry; yet, always excepted, that such rules are founded on the word of God, which is the only unerring guide of faith and practice.

(b.) These meetings are to commence and end with singing and prayer; and nothing shall be done but what will tend to build up and advance godliness.\*

(c.) Those who attend these special meetings but indifferently, sickness and absence from home excepted, after being twice or thrice admonished, without manifest amendment, shall exclude themselves from the church.

(d.) Every member of this church should fervently engage in private worship, morning and evening pray with his family, and himself and his household attend divine worship at all times.

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\* There was more of the class-meeting and less of the prayer-meeting in these meetings than belonged to the social meetings as first introduced by Mr. Otterbein.



(e.) Every member shall sedulously abstain from all backbiting and evil-speaking of any person, or persons, without exception, and especially of his brethren in the church. (Rom. xv. 1-3; II. Cor. xii. 20; I. Peter ii. 1; James iv. 11.) The transgressor shall, in the first instance, be admonished privately; but, the second time, he shall be openly rebuked in the class-meeting.

(f.) Every one must avoid all worldly and sinful company, and to the utmost shun all foolish talking and jesting. (Ps. xv. 4; Eph. v. 4-11.) This offense will meet with severe church-censure.

(g.) No one shall be permitted to buy or sell on the Sabbath, nor attend to worldly business; or to travel far or near, but each shall spend the day in quietness and religious exercises. (Isa. lviii. 13, 14.)

(h.) Each member shall willingly attend to any of the private concerns of the church, when required so to do by the preacher or vestry; and each one shall strive to lead a quiet and godly life, lest he give offense, and fall into the condemnation of the adversary. (Math. v. 14-16; I. Pet. ii. 12.)

6. Persons expressing a desire to commune with us at the Lord's table, although they have not been members of our church, shall be admitted by consent of the vestry; provided that nothing justly can be alleged against their walk in life, and more especially when it is known that they are seeking their salvation. After the preparation sermon, such persons may declare themselves openly before the as-

sembly, also, that they are ready to submit to all wholesome discipline; and thus they shall be received into the church.

7. Forasmuch as the difference of people and denominations end in Christ,—(Rom. x. 12; Col. iii. 11)—and availeth nothing in him, but a new creature—(Gal. vi. 13-16)—it becomes our duty, according to the gospel, to commune with, and admit to the Lord's table, professors, to whatever order or sort of the Christian church they belong.

8. All persons who may not attend our class-meetings, nor partake of the holy sacrament with us, but attend our public worship, shall be visited, by the preacher, in health and in sickness, and on all suitable occasions. He shall admonish them, baptize their children, attend to their funerals, impart instruction to their youths; and, should they have any children, the church shall interest itself for their education.

9. The preacher shall make it one of his highest duties to watch over the rising youth, diligently instruct them in the principles of religion, according to the word of God.\* He should catechise them once a week; and the more mature in years, who have obtained a knowledge of the great truths of the gospel, should be impressed with the impor-

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\* No doctrinal standard, outside of the Bible, is, in these articles, referred to. The Heidelberg Catechism, while prized by Mr. Otterbein, was yet, doubtless, at this time, accepted by him as Wesley accepted the Thirty-Nine Articles — with the reserved liberty to modify and construe. He catechised rather than taught a catechism.

tance of striving, through divine grace, to become worthy recipients of the holy sacrament. And in view of church-membership, such as manifest a desire to this end should be thoroughly instructed for a time, be examined in the presence of their parents and the vestry, and, if approved, after the preparation sermon, they should be presented before the church, and admitted.

10. The church is to establish and maintain a German school, as soon as possible; the vestry to spare no effort to procure the most competent teachers, and devise such means and rules as will promote the best interests of the school.

11. That, after the demise or removal of the preacher, the male members of the church shall meet, without delay, in the church-edifice, and after singing and prayer, one or more shall be proposed by the elders and trustees. A majority of votes shall determine the choice, and a call shall be made accordingly;\* but, should the preacher on whom the choice falls, decline the call, then as soon as possible others shall be proposed, and a choice made. But here it is especially reserved, that should it so happen that before the demise or removal of the preacher, his place should already have been provided for, by a majority of votes, then no new choice shall take place.

12. No preacher can stay among us who is not

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\* It will be noticed that there is no reference to any authority outside of the congregation.

in unison with our adopted rules, and order of things, and class-meetings, and who does not diligently observe them.

13. No preacher can stay among us who teaches the doctrine of predestination (*Gnadenwahl*), or the impossibility of falling from grace, and who holdeth these as doctrinal points.\*

14. No preacher can stay among us who will not to the best of his ability care for the various churches in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, which churches, under the superintendence of William Otterbein, stand in fraternal unity with us.

15. No preacher can stay among us who shall refuse to sustain, with all diligence, such members as have arisen from this or some other churches, or who may yet arise, as helpers in the work of the Lord as preachers and exhorters, and to afford unto them all possible encouragement, so long as their lives shall be according to the gospel. †

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\* The old church in Baltimore, among other regulations adopted in 1789, adopted the following: "No foreign preacher can preach in our church without the consent of the pastor and consistory, and he must acknowledge the Reformed confessions of Switzerland and Holland." This rule agrees well with the requirement that the church in Holland placed upon the Germans as a condition on which assistance would be given. In regard to predestination, no contrast could be greater than that presented by the rule adopted by Mr. Otterbein's church and the Reformed confessions referred to. While Mr. Otterbein's doctrinal views appear to have occasioned no trouble in the Reformed Church, the expression on doctrine as given in the thirteenth article above quoted, was, especially, in view of the connection with the Dutch Church, decidedly un-Reformed. It is not likely that Mr. Otterbein directly antagonized Calvinism before his removal to Baltimore.

† Articles fourteen and fifteen, showing the progress of the revival-movement, will be referred to on another page.

16. All the preceding items shall be presented to the preacher chosen, and his full consent thereto obtained, before he enters upon his ministry.

17. The preacher shall nominate the elders from among the members who attend the special meetings, and no others shall be proposed; and their duties shall be made known unto them, by him, before the church.

18. The elders, so long as they live in accordance with the gospel, and shall not attempt to introduce any new act contrary to this constitution and these ordinances, are not to be dismissed from their office, except on account of debility, or other cause. Should an elder wish to retire, then in that case, or in case of removal by death, the place shall be supplied by the preacher, as already provided.

19. The three trustees are to be chosen yearly, on New-year's-day, as follows:

The vestry will propose six from among the members who partake with us of the holy sacrament. Each voter shall write the names of the three he desires as trustees, on a piece of paper, and when the church has met, these papers shall be collected, opened, and read, and such as have a majority of votes shall be announced to the church, and their duties made known unto them, by the preacher, in the presence of the church.

20. The almoner shall be chosen at the same time, and in the same manner as the trustees, and at the next election, will present his account.

21. The preacher, elders, and trustees shall attend to all the affairs of the church, compose the church-vestry, and shall be so considered.

22. All deeds, leases, and other rights concerning the property of this church, shall be conveyed, in the best and safest manner, to this church-vestry, and their successors, as trustees of this church.

23. Should a preacher, elder, or trustee be accused of any known immorality, upon the testimony of two or three credible witnesses, the same shall be sustained against him, and he shall be immediately suspended; and, until he gives sure proof of true repentance, and makes open confession, he shall remain excluded from this church. The same rule shall be observed and carried out in relation to members of the church who shall be found guilty of immoral conduct. (I. Cor. v. 11-13; I. Tim. v. 20; Tit. iii. 10.)

24. All offenses between members shall be dealt with in strict conformity with the precepts of our Lord. (Matt. xviii. 15-18.) No one is, therefore, permitted to name the offender, or the offense, except in the order prescribed by our Savior.

25. No member is allowed to cite his brother before the civil authority, for any cause. All differences shall be laid before the vestry, or each party may choose a referee from among the members of the church, to whom the adjustment of the matter shall be submitted. The decision of either the vestry or referees shall be binding on each party;

nevertheless, should any one believe himself wronged, he may ask a second hearing, which shall not be refused. The second hearing may be either before the same men, or some others of the church; but whosoever shall refuse to abide by this second verdict, or, on any occasion, speak of the matter of dispute, or accuse his opponent with the same, excludes himself from the church.

26. The elders and trustees shall meet four times in the year; namely, the last Sabbath in March, the last Sabbath in June, the last Sabbath in September, and the last Sabbath in December, in the parsonage-house, after the afternoon service, to take the affairs of the church into consideration.

27. This constitution and these ordinances shall be read every New-year's-day, before the congregation, in order to keep the same in special remembrance, and that they may be carefully observed, and no one plead ignorance of the same.

28. We, the subscribers, acknowledge the above-written items and particulars, as the ground-work of our church, and we ourselves, as co-members, by our signatures, recognize and solemnly promise religious obedience to the same.

WILLIAM OTTERBEIN, *Preacher.*

LEHARD HERBACH, [Leonard Harbaugh.]	} <i>Elders.</i>
HENRY WEITNER, [Weidner.]	
PETER HOFFMAN.	

PHILIP BIER.	} <i>Trustees.</i>
WILLIAM BAKER.	
* ABRAHAM LORSH, [Larsh.]	

BALTIMORE, January 1, 1785.

All of the members of the church recorded their names with their own hand, thereby binding themselves to the constitution and principles of the church.

No one can fail to see in the foregoing articles an attempt to supply the essential elements of a church-discipline. Something was indeed trusted, on the basis of the Scriptures, to the Christian judgment of those immediately concerned; but nothing was left to be supplied by any existing church-regulations or formal statements of doctrine. The articles are not only complete in themselves, but they present, in discipline, doctrine, methods, and spirit the antithesis of the features belonging to the Reformed Church.

In 1798 the church was regularly incorporated.\* In the early history of Maryland there was no provision for the incorporation of churches.

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\* Inasmuch as reference has frequently been made, in different articles and books, to the charter of the congregation, that document will be inserted here. It should be remembered that thirteen years elapsed between the drawing up of the articles of discipline before given and the framing of the charter. The charter, however, presents few changes. The charter is much longer than that of the old church, the latter containing but five articles. It will be noticed that in the charter the word German is placed before "Evangelical Reformed." It does not seem to have been thus used before. In this case, though, it is rather used for fuller description than as a part of the title. The following is the charter:

WHEREAS, The German Evangelical Reformed Church of the city of Baltimore, by their petition to the General Assembly, have prayed that they may be incorporated with powers adequate to the regulation of their temporal concerns, and with authority to take, hold, and possess property



It seems that after the points that have been given, and others that involuntarily rise out of the simple narration of events, are taken into account, it must be evident that Mr. Otterbein's church was not a regular Reformed church. If men still persist in making statements to that

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sufficient for the support of their minister, for the repairing and keeping in repair of their church, for building and keeping in repair a school-house, and for other secular matters pertaining to their society; therefore,

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That Wm. Otterbein (the present minister), Peter Hoffman, Philip Bier, and Christian Matioth (the present elders), John Shults, Henry Bender, and Thomas Cronmiller (the present trustees), with all the present members, and also those that may hereafter become members of said congregation shall be, and they are hereby declared to be one body polite and corporate, by the name and style of elders, trustees, and members of the German Evangelical Reformed Church in the city of Baltimore, and by that name and style shall have perpetual succession, and shall be capable in law to sue and be sued, to plead and be impleaded, in any court of law and equity within this state or elsewhere, and make, change, and alter at pleasure a common seal, and shall be capable hereafter to purchase, receive, hold, and enjoy any estate or donation, real, personal, or mixed, not exceeding six thousand dollars; and,

*Be it enacted,* That the male members of the said church, of the full age of twenty-one years, may and shall meet, on the first Monday of January next, or within ten days thereafter in every year after the passage of this act, at their church, or at such other place within the city of Baltimore as may be appointed by the elders and trustees, for the time being, notice being given by the president on the Sunday preceding the day of such meeting, and may and shall there and then, elect by ballot four of the most pious and discreet members of the said church to serve as elders for one year, and until another election made in virtue of this act; as also to elect four other discreet members of their body as trustees to serve for one year, and until another election shall be made in virtue of this act; and,

*Be it enacted;* That in all cases where an elder or elders, trustee or trustees is or are to be appointed in virtue of this act, the president, elders, and trustees for the time being, shall at least eight days before the day of such election nominate from the the most pious and discreet members of

effect, then there is an end to any agreement among men, and persons may say whatever whims or prejudice may suggest. All reasoning and assertion must be alike irresponsible.

Although harmony and zeal characterized Mr. Otterbein's congregation, the numerical increase

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the said church double the number of elder or elders, trustee or trustees, so to be appointed; and,

*Be it enacted*, That the president appointed for the time being, and the elders and trustees now appointed or their successors who may hereafter be elected, or a majority of them, may meet together from time to time, and as often as they may judge necessary, to transact, manage, and regulate the business of the church, and to make such rules and by-laws as they may judge necessary for the good conduct and government of the members, and management of their temporal concerns; provided always that such rules and by-laws be not contrary to the constitution and laws of this state; and,

*Be it enacted*, That the said body corporate shall not be able or capable of purchasing any property, real or personal, unless with the consent and approbation of three fourths of their whole number; and,

*Be it enacted*, That all the lands and tenements, with their appurtenances now vested in the minister or any other person for the use of the said church, and all other property of the said church shall be and are hereby absolutely and unconditionally vested in the said body corporate, and their successors forever, and the said corporation with the consent and approbation of three fourths of their whole number shall be and are hereby declared to be able and capable of bargaining, and selling, and leasing, and conveying any part of the said property or any other property that may hereafter be acquired by the said corporation, in as full and effectual a manner as any person or body polite may or can do; and,

*Be it enacted*, That at all meetings of the said elders and trustees the minister for the time being shall be the president, and all acts or deeds of the corporation shall be signed by the president and sealed with the corporation seal; and all deeds for the conveyance of any land of the corporation, which by the law of the land ought to be acknowledged and recorded, shall be signed and sealed as aforesaid, and also acknowledged by the president in behalf of the corporation in the same manner and form as is prescribed in the case of individual grantors, and all acts and deeds of the said corporation so authenticated shall be valid and effectual in law; and,

was not rapid. In 1791 there were only sixty members. This limited success can be accounted for in part by Mr. Otterbein's frequent absences on his itinerant tours; but it was also due in part to the field that he had to cultivate, and to the rivalry that sprung up between the new and the old congregations.\* In character, however, the

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*Be it enacted*, That in case of the absence, removal, or death of the minister, the elders and trustees for the time being may appoint one of their own body president *pro tempore*, who during such absence or death, until the appointment of another minister, shall have all the authority and privileges of a president; and,

*Be it enacted*, That in case of death, resignation, or a disqualification of any elder or trustee, the body corporate shall without delay proceed to the election of another person in his place, whereof due notice shall be given by the president to the members of the corporation; and,

*Be it enacted*, That at a reasonable time before any and every election the president shall nominate and appoint three persons to be the judges thereof.

\* Some light is thrown on the situation in Baltimore by a letter written in 1786 by Rev. Nicholas Pomp, the pastor of the old congregation. The letter certainly gives the writer's views and feelings. While some rather severe expressions are used in regard to Mr. Otterbein, or perhaps more particularly "his people," it is yet to be remembered that if Mr. Otterbein was only carrying out his characteristic work of evangelizing, the manner in which he would have been stigmatized would have been the same. Dr. Pomp's views of things appear from the following words used by him in 1806: "I not only answered your letters but also, in a printed newspaper, gave my views in regard to the Methodists, or fanatics (*strabblers*), with the hope that you might be able to make good use of what I wrote." The following are extracts from the letter: "The division caused long ago by Mr. Otterbein was like a certain operation, well known in chemistry, by which the quintessence is withdrawn from the mass, and the rest remains as a *caput mortuum*. "Mr. Otterbein is, as you well know, my rival, who, on his part, suffers nothing to remain undone that might serve to keep me down. When strangers come from the country, or from Europe, and take up their residence in the city, he and his people are very busy to bring them over to their side. How contemptuously they speak of me, under

congregation was the very best. It was composed of the most enlightened, substantial, and thrifty of the German population of Baltimore, and their descendants, to this day, have filled, in the various circles of life, high and honored places.

It would perhaps be expected that an account would be given here of Mr. Otterbein's domestic situation, his personal habits, and his personal relations. This, however, will be given in a subsequent chapter.


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such circumstances, you can well imagine. Notwithstanding all this, the greater number of strangers connect themselves with us, because the Methodist ways which Mr. Otterbein pursues with his people are not yet acceptable to many German Protestants. Otherwise we are at peace with each other, inasmuch as we have no labors to perform in common. At the next meeting of cœtus I may be compelled to oppose Mr. Otterbein, on account of a preacher named Geeting, from the neighborhood of Hagerstown, who is to be ordained by the cœtus. I have heard the man preach and I know what a fanatic he is."

## CHAPTER X.

### CO-LABORERS IN GENERAL.

Hendel — Wagner — Hantz — Henop — Weimer — Schwoppe —  
A Pietistic Tendency — Minutes of Important Meetings — A  
License — Remarks — The Methodists — Asbury and Otter-  
bein — Asbury's Consecration as Superintendent — Incidents.

 HERE were a few ministers belonging to the cœtus of the Reformed Church whose friendly co-operation with Mr. Otterbein was so marked as to entitle them to a brief notice here.

The first of those to be named was Rev. Wm. Hendel, the brother-in-law of Mr. Otterbein. He came to this country from the Palatinate in Germany in 1764, being then perhaps forty years of age, and having had experience in the ministry before his coming. He was a man of thorough scholarship and rare pulpit talents. His piety was deep and unfeigned. He was an excellent pastor, and early introduced prayer-meetings. He is spoken of by Mr. Stahlschmidt as one of the best preachers with whom he became acquainted in America, and as a man "without any sectarian or party spirit." He served congrega-

tions at Lancaster, Tulpehocken, and Philadelphia. At Tulpehocken he served as many as nine congregations at one time. He gave great attention to destitute congregations beyond his regular charge. He died at Philadelphia in 1798 a martyr to his devotion to the multitudes that that year fell victims to the yellow fever. His zealous labors did not fail to rouse opposition. As remarked by Dr. Harbaugh, "It would be strange if so good a man had not awakened some worldly spirits against him." In various forms we find the truest sympathy and most earnest co-operation between Mr. Hendel and Mr. Otterbein.

Rev. Daniel Wagner was another of the intimate and constant friends of Mr. Otterbein. Mr. Otterbein was intimately associated with the Wagner family in Europe, and they are supposed to have come to this country at the same time with him. He doubtless often visited the family during his Tulpehocken ministry, as the home of the family was not far from his place of labor. Mr. Wagner entered the ministry in 1771, having previously received a liberal preparation. He studied theology under Dr. Hendel. Dr. Mayer said of him, "He did not concern himself in idle questions and disputes, or in sectarian zeal for words and opinions." His piety was "lively, earnest, and full of feeling—the religion of the living and

not of the dead." When Mr. Otterbein left York, he recommended Mr. Wagner as his successor. Mr. Wagner afterward served at Tulpehocken, then a second period at York, and after that at Frederick, the place of his last labors. He died at York in 1810. Mr. Otterbein kept up a regular correspondence with him, and the letters written by Mr. Otterbein were preserved until within a comparatively recent time. It is related that Mr. Wagner kept a written sermon of Mr. Otterbein's for the purpose of testing the proficiency of his pupils in reading. Mr. Otterbein's hand-writing, while regular and quite artistic to the eye, was difficult to read. This sermon, too, has only lately disappeared. If we had the letters in which Mr. Otterbein unfolded his inmost thoughts to the warm and true-hearted Wagner, we would have a treasure indeed.

Rev. Anthony Hautz, a pupil of Dr. Hendel, showed great friendship, whenever occasions offered, to Mr. Otterbein and his fellow-laborers. He began his ministry in 1787. He preached in Harrisburg, and at Carlisle, and after 1803 removed to the state of New York. It was under his preaching that Jacob Albright was awakened. Mr. Albright was converted, however, sometime afterward, at the house of Rev. A. Riegel, who was associated with the United Brethren.

Rev. Frederick Henop, another fellow-laborer of Mr. Otterbein, entered upon his ministry about 1764. About 1770 he accepted a call to Frederick. While at this place he made many missionary journeys across the Potomac into Virginia. He died in 1784. He was a man that felt the necessities of the times, and sought by every available means to carry the gospel to his neglected countrymen.

Rev. Jacob Weimer deserves a notice in this connection. In 1770 he began in Maryland his ministerial labors, Hagerstown being his place of residence. In much the same manner as did Mr. Henop, he served the destitute congregations in Virginia. "Mr. Weimer was a good man, an excellent preacher, plain and practical, beloved by every person, both in and out of his congregation."

Of Mr. Schwope it is unnecessary to speak here at length. His spirit was doubtless molded largely by Mr. Otterbein, and perhaps, too, somewhat by Mr. Strawbridge, the first Methodist preacher in America. After his retirement from Baltimore he appears again to have resided at Pipe Creek. He was an earnest evangelical preacher of "extraordinary talents," and is often mentioned by Mr. Asbury. The latter records his death as having occurred in Kentucky in



the winter of 1809-10, at the advanced age of eighty. It is an error to suppose that Mr. Otterbein was ever, in a special sense, under the influence of Mr. Schwope. The likeness in spirit and purpose of the latter to the former was the basis and limit of their co-operation.

A subject will now be considered that must have great interest to every one that would understand the different features of the movement with which Mr. Otterbein was identified. Mr. Otterbein began to introduce into the Reformed Church, with considerable success, some of the peculiar elements of Pietism. This is the subject to be considered. It will be remembered that Dr. Schramm, Mr. Otterbein's instructor, was in deep sympathy with the spirit and methods of Spener, the founder of Pietism. Pietism was so named from the associations that were formed for the promotion of piety (*collegia pietatis*). The aim was not to found a new church, but to form little associations within the different churches (*ecclesiolæ in ecclesia*) to introduce a leaven that would leaven the whole lump. The dead formalism of the times constituted the apology for the extraordinary measures introduced, and enlightened Christians generally, despite the weaknesses of Pietism, have been thankful that in the exigency of the church God raised up a Spener. George God-

frey and Philip William Otterbein were in a marked degree inclined to Pietism.

Pietism arose in the first place to supply life in the place of a dead orthodoxy, but in the time of the Otterbeins, notwithstanding the defection in its ranks, it was the wing of protection against the blasting and desolating effects of rationalism. Mr. Otterbein in this country was profoundly sensible of the wave that was extending itself so ruinously over all Germany. Much in his career is explicable only on the ground of his acquaintance, through his intimate connections with Germany, with the haughty, self-sufficient rationalism of Europe. There, culture, philosophy, and even ecclesiastical systems were in the first place conquered, and then made the instruments and abettors of this gigantic and destructive movement. It is no wonder that pious minds in Europe sought safety in a separation from the ruling elements of life, and sought to promote inward piety and practical Christianity in the restricted fellowship of kindred souls. In America, aside from the reaction against formalism, and the fear of the desolations of rationalism, there was an effort to overcome the aggravated evils resulting from a promiscuous church-membership in the wanton, mixed society produced by the commingling of the most diverse, often the most wretched elements of

the Old World. All understood themselves to be church-members, and all that chose had a part in making up and controlling the church. No wonder that such men as Otterbein and Hendel desired a more suitable and promising beginning for the work that was to be done among the Germans of America. John Wesley, who drew largely from the Pietists, notwithstanding the members of his societies were a people sifted from the promiscuous membership of the Anglican Church, yet had his "bands" and "select societies" through which he hoped to cause a purer light and a more elevating influence to radiate.

Let us now turn to the minutes of several meetings participated in by ministers that had united together to form these nuclei in their own congregations, as well as elsewhere. The first formal meeting was after Mr. Otterbein's going to Baltimore. The minutes that follow were lately discovered at Pipe Creek, Maryland, and are in the hand-writing of Benedict Schwopce.\* The minutes are of sufficient interest to be given entire. In regard to many things, they explain themselves.

May 29, 1774.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At our meeting at Pipe Creek the following action

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\* Knowledge of the existence of these minutes was first communicated to the author by Dr. J. H. Dubbs, by whom they were afterward translated and published, in connection with an article, in the *Reformed Quarterly*.

was taken respecting our several congregations: Concerning the congregation at Baltimore it was resolved that, besides the public meeting on Sunday, the male members shall meet twice a week in two classes; to-wit, the class in the upper part of the city on Tuesday evening; and of this class Leonard Herbach is appointed leader (*Aufseher*). The other class, of which Henry Weidner is leader, meets on Friday evening. The female members are to meet separately, every Tuesday afternoon.

2. The members at Pipe Creek (*die Peiff-Kricker*) have also formed themselves into two classes. David Schreiber and Michael Huebener are appointed leaders of the first, and Uhly Aeckler and Hans Fischer of the second class. These are to meet every Sunday; and no one is to withdraw without good reason.

3. The members at Sam's Creek (*die Sam's Kricker*) are to constitute a single class. Adam Lehman and Martin Cassel are appointed leaders. They are also to hold their meetings on Sunday.

4. The members at Fredericktown (*die Friedrichstown*) have organized but one class. They are to meet on Sunday evening, and propose to elect a leader for themselves.

5. The members at Antietam (*die Antitemer*) are to meet every Sunday, in two classes. George Adam Gueding and Samuel Becker are appointed leaders. They are to meet alternately at the church and at Conrad Schnaebeli's, or wherever else the leaders may direct.

The ground and object of these meetings is to be, that those thus united may encourage one another, pray and sing in unison, and watch over one another's conduct. At these meetings they are to be especially careful to see to it that family worship is regularly maintained. All those who are thus united are to take heed that no disturbances occur among them, and that the affairs of the congregations be conducted and managed in an orderly manner.

Resolved to meet again on the first Sunday in October at D. Schreiber's. Done on the date above mentioned.

W. OTTERBEIN.

B. SWOPE.

October 2, 1774.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At our meeting at David Schreiber's, at Pipe Creek, the following action was taken concerning our several congregations:

1. In the previously-mentioned congregations everything remains as at first arranged, without any change.

2. Several friends in Canawaken [Conewago] have agreed to hold meetings; but no leader has yet been appointed. They are to meet every Sunday; and it is determined that they shall be visited from time to time by one of the undersigned ministers.

3. The friends in Sharpsburg have formed a union (*haben sich vereinigt*). Mr. Stein (?), the

school-master, is appointed their leader. Further arrangements are to be made at the earliest opportunity by Benedict Swope and Mr. Weimer.

4. The friends in Funkstown and Hagerstown are to be visited and organized (like the above congregations) by the aforesaid ministers.

5. Resolved to meet next year in Frederick, on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

Done on the date aforesaid.

W. OTTERBEIN.

W. HENDEL.

JACOB WEIMER.

FRIEDERICH LUD. HENOP.

DANIEL WAGNER.

BENEDICT SWOPE.

FREDERICKTOWN, June 12, 1775.

In the name of our blessed Lord. Amen.

We, William Otterbein, William Hendel, Frederick Henop, Jacob Weimer, Daniel Wagner, and Benedict Swope, have met in this town, according to the resolution passed at our meeting held last October at Pipe Creek, and after due examination the following was found to be the condition of the congregations or classes :

1. The friends in this town are at peace, and continue their private meetings twice a week, besides regularly attending the service in the church.

2. The friends at Pipe Creek are equally prosperous, appear serious in their conduct, and, it is hoped, derive a blessing from their meetings.

3. Those at Sam's Creek are at peace and appear serious.

4. Those at Antietam are again at peace, after a slight disturbance, and meet on Sundays.

5. Those at Baltimore are at peace; but it is to be feared and guarded against, that with their good order and regular meetings they do not take the appearance for the reality.

6. Those at Sharpsburg remain in their previous condition. They hold meetings. There is no reason to imagine evil, but it might be wished that their condition were more prosperous.

7. Those at Funkstown number only a few families, and as they live close together they meet according to their convenience. At this place progress is very desirable.

9. The friends at Canawaken (who were mentioned at our last meeting at Pipe Creek) continue to meet on Sunday, besides going regularly to church, as is our universal order. We have reason to hope for good results.

10. Certain friends in Hagerstown were interested, but none of them have come to our present meeting. We hope the Lord will kindle among them a flame of love and holy zeal.

11. Resolved, that our next meeting be held at Baltimore, on Sunday, October 15th.

Finally, we observe that since our first meeting, which is now more than a year ago, no disturbance has arisen in any one of the aforesaid

classes and congregations—except a little trouble at Antietam, which has been covered up with the mantle of charity. In this may be seen the fruits of good discipline, in that at least three hundred souls have remained so long at peace, and we hope in the blessing of the Lord; and may doubtless be preserved in this condition. We hope and desire that the Lord, the merciful, would daily add to their numbers.

Written and done on the date aforesaid, by order of the United Ministers, by

BENEDICT SWOPE, *Secretary*.

BALTIMORE TOWN, October 15, 1775.

In Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We, William Otterbein, William Hendel, Frederick Lud. Henop, Daniel Wagner, and Benedict Schwob have met again, in this town, in accordance with the resolution adopted at our last meeting, in Fredericktown, on the 12th of June last.

1. The friends in this town are at peace. They observe the former regulations, and there is no change.

2. The friends in Frederick continue in their former state of prosperity; so also the class at P. Kemp's. Both have increased in numbers.

3. The friends at Sam's Creek continue at peace as previously. Friend Conrad Dotterer has been appointed leader instead of Martin Cassel, who lives too far away.



4. The friends at Antietam are at peace, and hold meetings according to our rules.

5. Those at Sharpsburg are at peace, and conduct themselves in accordance with the general rules of their meetings. It is well. Hopes of increase.

6. Those at Funkstown are at peace, and meet weekly.

7. Those at Hagerstown are at peace, and meet every Sunday.

8. The friends at Canawaken meet every Sunday, and are at peace.

9. The friends at Great Pipe Creek are thus far at peace (some troubles in the Stein family excepted).

10. The friends at Little Pipe Creek are in perfect peace, and we trust enjoy a blessing. Both classes at the Pipe Creeks meet every Sunday, and still have their first leaders.

11. Several friends in Germantown [Manchester, Maryland] have made application, and are to be served.

12. Resolved, that our next meeting be held in Hagerstown on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

BENEDICT SCHWOB, *Scriba*.

June 2, 1776, JOHN RANGER'S.

In Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We, William Otterbein, William Hendel, Daniel Wagner, Jacob Weimer, and Benedict Schwob have held another meeting, according to the resolution adopted at our last meeting, held at Baltimore, on the 15th of October last.

1. The friends in Baltimore are prosperous, and meet as formerly. The congregation has, however, been considerably weakened by disturbances caused by the war.

2. The friends in Fredericktown are prosperous and at peace, and have increased in numbers. The class at P. Kemp's is not so prosperous. Steiner and Studel leaders.

3. The friends at Sam's Creek are prosperous.

4. The friends at the Antietam continue at peace, and are prosperous.

5. The friends in Sharpsburg were for some time careless, but have now become more active.

6. Those at Funkstown and Hagerstown have united. George Arnold, leader.

7. Those at Canawaken are prosperous and serious.

8. Those at Great Pipe Creek are prosperous and at peace. Leaders, Jost Maurer and Jacob Cassel.

9. Those at Little Pipe Creek are prosperous.

10. Beaver Dam. The friends are united and meet every Sunday.

11. At Peter Reitenauer's the friends meet every Sunday. Peter Reitenauer, leader.

12. Germantown is to be further supplied.

13. On Sunday, October 20th, we will meet again in Canawaken, at Jacob Wilt's.

BENEDICT SCHWOB, *Scriba.*

Dr. Hendel at this time was laboring at Tulpehocken, a place rather distantly removed from

the general field indicated in the minutes. Mr. Henop was at Frederick, Mr. Weimer at Hagerstown, and Mr. Wagner at York. In connection with the conferences of the ministers, important Sabbath-meetings were doubtless held, as two of the dates above given fall upon the Sabbath, one on Monday, and two on Friday.

At the meeting, June 2d, 1776, the last for which we have minutes, the following license was granted:

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

We, the undersigned ministers of the Reformed Church, hereby announce and make known to whom it may concern, that Henry Weidner is a member of the Reformed Church, and inasmuch as we believe that the Lord has called him into his vineyard, we allow him to preach the gospel, and hope that lovers of the truth will receive him in love; and we invoke upon him the grace and blessing of God.

Given in our ministerial meeting, at John Ranger's, June 4th, 1776.

WILLIAM OTTERBEIN.

WILLIAM HENDEL.

JACOB WEIMER.

BENEDICT SWOPE.

The granting of this license seems to have been the most extreme, or the most advanced step of the "united ministers." The fact that Mr. Henop was not present at the meeting, and that Mr.

Wagner, who was present, did not sign the license may indicate that the opposition from the side of the cœtus was manifesting itself so decidedly that further co-operation with the movement became hazardous. The cœtus at no time could have looked with favor upon it, and likely at first its notice was not so much attracted. Hendel and Wagner, too, while personally continuing on the best terms with Mr. Otterbein, came to regard with apprehension or disfavor the more and more decided measures that he deemed it necessary to employ.

All the ministers were members of the Reformed cœtus. Mr. Otterbein had before this been associated with others than Reformed, but his removal to Baltimore, and the progress of the Revolutionary War, temporarily separated him from his former associates. Besides, a work in the Reformed Church would have been impeded, if not made impossible, by connections beyond the church. Mr. Otterbein and his associates certainly expected to work a transformation throughout the extent of the Reformed Church. In 1777 we find awakened persons of all classes received into Mr. Otterbein's "societies," and other things that indicate that the movement in the Reformed Church had reached its limit. It is probable that the meeting appointed for October, 1776, was not held, or if so, that it was the last.

Mr. Otterbein and Mr. Schwoppe were the only ones of the "united ministers" that, on the discontinuance of the meetings, sought, on a wider scale, to carry out their purpose. Those that afterward confined their labors to the regular channel, accomplished in the Reformed Church, it must be remarked, beneficent results. The "laymen," however, did not so generally withdraw from the work on which they had entered. Henry Weidner, already noticed, Adam Lehman, Leonard Herbach (Harbaugh), Peter Kemp, and George A. Geeting\* were afterward active and successful preachers among the United Brethren. In subsequent times, in the country in Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, in which the "united ministers" labored, Mr. Otterbein found a welcome field. The Maryland and Virginia Germans of the Reformed faith were especially destitute, as the aid received from Holland, by the plan on which it was contributed, was mostly to be expended in Pennsylvania.

This account of Mr. Otterbein's occupying a leading place among the "united ministers" explains much, but not everything, in his course. It does not explain the anterior union at Isaac Long's. It does not indicate the relations and

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\* Some of these had begun to preach before 1774. George A. Geeting, for example, began to preach in 1772.

limits of his subsequent course. It does demonstrate, however, the possibility of his sustaining a double relation, which double relation, in turn, made it possible, under the force of circumstances, for the line of attachments that at first was the more frail, practically to supplant, in the end, the line that, at the first, was the stronger.

Between Mr. Otterbein and the early Methodists with whom he came in contact the relations were the most appreciative and cordial. It is to be remarked, however, that when he began to preach an evangelical experience, and even when he began to hold prayer-meetings at Tulpehocken, in 1758 and 1759, there were no Methodist preachers in America. Mr. Wesley, before his conversion, had spent some time in Georgia, and Mr. Whitefield had traversed the country, mostly through the South, preaching with unrivaled eloquence the stirring truths of the gospel. He, however, left no organization and appointed no preachers. Some persons converted under his labors, though, were unable to keep to themselves their glowing experiences, and involuntarily became preachers. We read of ministers being sought, in later times, to fill the places of these worn-out Whitefield or "new light" preachers. Robert Strawbridge, a Methodist local preacher, came to this country and settled at Sam's Creek,

Maryland, between 1760 and 1765. Philip Embury began to preach in New York in 1766, and in the same year formed the first Methodist class in America. Messrs. Boardman and Pillmore, the first missionaries sent out by Mr. Wesley, arrived in New York in 1769. In 1771 Mr. Francis Asbury and Mr. Richard Wright arrived.

Between Mr. Asbury and Mr. Otterbein there sprung up an almost romantic friendship. In 1772 Mr. Schwoppe and Mr. Asbury first met, and through the former Mr. Asbury was made acquainted with the character and work of Mr. Otterbein. In February, 1774, Mr. Asbury, as already related, wrote a letter to Mr. Otterbein to influence him to settle in Baltimore.\* On May 4th, 1774, the very day on which Mr. Otterbein entered upon his work in Baltimore, Mr. Otterbein and Mr. Asbury first met. The latter made the following entry in his journal: "Had a friendly intercourse with Mr. O. and Mr. S., the German ministers, respecting the plan of church-discipline on which they intend to proceed. They agreed to imitate our methods as nearly as possible." †

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\*Some respectable writers have said that Mr. Asbury obtained the position for him. This is strangely reversing matters.

†The agreement to imitate must be understood of the most general features only. The Methodists did not then form a church, either in Europe or America. Mr. Otterbein resisted the adoption of the articles and

Mr. Otterbein was at this time in his forty-eighth year, and Mr. Asbury was in his twenty-ninth year. Mr. Asbury had been preaching, though, since his sixteenth year. Mr. Otterbein was large and impressive in appearance; Mr. Asbury was medium in height, compactly built, and, in his appearance, boyish. At this time Mr. Otterbein knew little English, and Mr. Asbury, no German. Great as were the contrasts between these men, the things in which they were alike, though hidden more or less from view, were greater and more decidedly marked. They had yielded to the same truth; they had experienced the same things; they preached the same doctrines; they were each intrusted with a great mission. Mr. Otterbein was the greater in spiritual resource, and was possessed of larger preaching-talent; Mr. Asbury was greater in active power, and had before him a clearer aim and a more inviting field. Each, however, in the respects in which he was inferior to the other still towered far above the forms of common men. While Mr. Asbury was nominally a member of the English Episcopal Church, the separation was already so great, on the part of the Methodists

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discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, after that church was organized. A subsequent remark of Mr. Asbury was that Mr. Otterbein "could only approve;" that is, he approved of the wisdom of the articles and rules themselves, but could not take it upon himself to introduce them.



in general, that he experienced practically little embarrassment from this formal connection. In the holding of property and the management of their affairs, the Methodists were already a distinct people. Yet they positively refused to assume the administration of the ordinances. Mr. Asbury himself was still a layman. Mr. Otterbein had regular ministerial standing, and thus was under no embarrassment as regards the ordinances; yet his connection with the cœtus long restrained him from a fully decided course.

April 28th and 29th, 1775, Mr. Asbury made the following entry in his journal: "Mr. Otterbein, the Dutch minister, accompanied me to I. O.'s, where we had a blessed and refreshing season. \* \* \* I dined with Mr. O., the minister mentioned above, and spent the afternoon with him and Mr. S. [Schwope]. \* \* \* They both appear to be sincerely religious, and intend to make proposals to the German synod this year to lay a plan for the reformation of the Dutch congregations."

June 18th, 1776, he wrote, "Returned on Wednesday to Baltimore, and spent some time with Mr. O. There are very few with whom I can find so much unity and freedom in conversation as with him."

January 27th, 1777, he wrote, "I have had an

agreeable conversation with my friend Mr. Otterbein."

Their friendship being such, it is not strange that Mr. Asbury desired Mr. Otterbein to take a part in his consecration as a superintendent of the Methodists in America. The first Methodist general conference, as it may be called, met in Baltimore, December 25th, 1784. Mr. Asbury was ordained deacon on the first day of the conference, by Dr. Coke, an elder ordained in the Church of England, and specially consecrated by Mr. Wesley superintendent of the work in America. Dr. Coke was assisted by Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, who were ordained as elders by Mr. Wesley. On the day following, Dr. Coke, assisted by the same elders, ordained Mr. Asbury to the office of elder. On the next day, Monday, Dr. Coke, assisted by the same elders, and also by Mr. Otterbein,\* consecrated Mr. Asbury to the office of superintendent.

It lingered as a tradition in Baltimore that a committee from the conference waited upon Mr. Otterbein to secure his presence and assistance at

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\*One of the elders who assisted at the consecration of Mr. Asbury was the Rev. Mr. Otterbein, a minister of the German Church. Having enjoyed an intimate acquaintance with this pious and evangelical minister of Jesus Christ, and having full fellowship with him as a laborious and useful servant of God, Mr. Asbury requested that he might be associated with Dr. Coke and the other elders in the performance of this solemn ceremony.—Dr. Bangs.

the consecration, and that he said to the committee, "I must first consult with my God." When the committee called the next morning he expressed his willingness to comply with the wish of Mr. Asbury and of the conference.

Mr. Asbury often afterward referred to the presence of Mr. Otterbein at his consecration; and especially was this the case when the character of his office was called in question.

The organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church was a great boon to the American Methodists. The power that this organization put into the hands of Mr. Asbury, and the sinews that it put into the arm of the Methodist movement, introduced a new era in the religious history of the New World. And yet those seem to be right that assert that the mode of organization, especially as it stood a few years later, transcended any definite thought that Mr. Wesley could have had, involving at once more of distinct churchly character than was consistent with the general direction that he sought to preserve to himself. It must be admitted, however, that it was not inconsistent with Mr. Wesley's temper and habit to submit great contingencies to the direction of infinite Wisdom; and further that divine Providence not unfrequently takes things out of the hands of the greatest providential leaders.

The friendship formed between Mr. Otterbein and Mr. Asbury was as intimate as it was firm and lasting. An incident or two will illustrate.

As Mr. Asbury was a non-juror, and also in consequence of some expressions of Mr. Wesley on the right of England to coerce the colonies, Mr. Asbury, as well as other Methodist ministers, was regarded with suspicion by the American authorities. He was once, near Baltimore, actually arrested and fined. In this state of things, it is said that he was at one time sheltered and cared for at Mr. Otterbein's house.


A rather ludicrous story, contrasting rather strikingly with the great work in which these champions were engaged, is as follows: Mr. Asbury, as an exception for a man of his temperament, had written some verses, which some of his enthusiastic friends urged him to publish. He had some misgivings, but thought he could trust the judgment and candor of Mr. Otterbein. Mr. Otterbein examined the verses carefully, and when Mr. Asbury asked him for his opinion, he replied: "Bruder Asbury, I don't tink you was porn a boet." This honest expression was sufficient, and saved Mr. Asbury from having attached to his great reputation as a bishop the unenviable reputation of being the author of bad poetry.

The lapse of forty years and the marvelous and crowding changes that took place during that time, had no power to break or weaken the friendship of Otterbein and Asbury, entered upon thus auspiciously. In these pages we shall yet frequently see, side by side, the laborious Asbury and the venerable Otterbein.

## CHAPTER XI.

### PROGRESS OF THE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT.

Antecedent Stages—Newcomer—His Preparation for the Work—His Account of his Connection with the Movement—Various Notes of Progress—Conference of 1789—Members of the Conference—Objects Sought—Confession of Faith and Rules—Conference of 1791—New Members—The Extent and Character of the Work—Mr. Otterbein's Presence and Assistance—The Antietam Meetings—Mr. Otterbein Present at Meetings of the Reformed Church—The Methodists Welcomed to His Church—Mr. Otterbein Wearing Out.

HE joint labors of Mr. Otterbein and Mr. Boehm belonging to the earlier period were, in consequence of the place and circumstances of each, but occasional, and not without considerable interruptions. Mr. Otterbein's visit to Germany, then his removal from York to Baltimore, and then the breaking out of the Revolutionary War, delayed the period of a closely united and general movement. The Mennonite and Reformed currents were to pass through a process of separate increase and definition before they were to unite. The preparation of the people came later than the preparation of the leaders.

Some laborers that were raised up under Mr. Otterbein or Mr. Boehm have already been referred to; but the first preacher that was raised up under the influence of the finally united elements was Christian Newcomer, who began his preaching in 1777. The relations of Mr. Newcomer to Mr. Otterbein, and to the work in which the latter was engaged, make it proper to give here a somewhat full account of his conversion and entrance upon the ministry.\*

Christian Newcomer was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, January 21st, 1749. His grandfather, who came to this country from Switzerland between 1719 and 1727, was Peter Newcomer. His father's name was Wolfgang Newcomer. The family were Mennonites. Christian Newcomer, when he was seventeen years of age, experienced in his soul the grace of God; but being without enlightened spiritual advisers, he lost his confidence and fell into partial indifference and worldliness. In 1770 he was married to Miss Elizabeth Baer. Not long afterward, during a severe illness, he was again able to rejoice in the conscious favor of God. He now felt con-

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\* The main source is Newcomer's journal, published in 1834. After an introduction relating to Newcomer's whole life, the journal gives an account of his labors from 1795 to 1830. The omissions in this journal are so many, even in regard to matter of the highest importance, that little, on any given subject, can be inferred from its silence.

strained to tell every one of the blessing that he had received. Having at times, however, some misgivings, he determined to consult a Mennonite preacher in whom he confided, and walked eight miles for this purpose. In his journal he says: "I related to him, with all the fervor of a new convert, what the work of grace had accomplished in my soul. My heart was full of the love of God, and my expressions were, perhaps, rather fervent; therefore, he could not understand me. He thought me hasty; said that I had formed too stout an opinion in this matter, and might very easily be in error in believing such professed experience. \* \* \* We frequently differed in opinion during the conversation we had on the subject. On my side I maintained the assertion that a person could, and surely would, be conscious of the fact when God for Christ's sake had shown mercy to him a poor sinner, in granting unto him a free pardon for all his guilt; yea more, I contended that the promised seed of the woman should also bruise the serpent's head within us; that is to say, subdue the inclination to sin, and conquer the power thereof in our souls. This my friend would by no means admit."

Sometime afterward the minister fell sick, and Mr. Newcomer felt constrained to pay him a visit. When they were left alone the minister turned to



him and said, "Christian, do you yet recollect the conversation and dispute we had together when you were here the last time, particularly in regard to the seed of the woman and the serpent?" Following Mr. Newcomer's response, the minister continued, "Since that time the conviction has darted through my mind like a flash of lightning, that the seed of the woman can and must destroy the head of the serpent within me, in my heart. Yes, I do believe that by the power of our Savior Jesus Christ sin can and must be destroyed in my heart, if I shall be saved." Mr. Newcomer was led into his experience of divine grace, not by the counsels and assistance of men, but by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who seemed to be working independently in so many hearts, and in places separated by wide distances.

His home was about nine miles from Lancaster and about thirteen miles from the home of Martin Boehm. In his immediate neighborhood there were two divisions of the Mennonites, and prejudice of the most inveterate kind kept the different parties to themselves. There was a congregation, too, of those that were associated with Martin Boehm; yet the strong prejudice in the community kept young Newcomer from becoming acquainted with Mr. Boehm, or with the spirit of the congregation. Yet his was one of the hearts

in which God's Spirit was laying the foundation for a great and wide-embracing work.

He, however, shrunk from the duty of publicly declaring to others what God had done for him. Even his neighbors urged him to preach. Ultimately, like Jonah,—a comparison used by himself,—he sought safety in flight. Having sold his farm, he moved to Frederick County,—after 1776 within the limits of Washington County,—Maryland. This removal took place in the spring of 1775. As might have been expected, disobedience to duty plunged him again into the abyss of doubt and wretchedness. From this deplorable state he was at length, while engaged in prayer, rescued. The following is the account of his experience: “Henceforward my peace flowed again like a river. With confidence I could now draw to a throne of grace, crying Abba Father. My whole soul was swallowed up in love to God. \* \* \* Since the peace of God was restored again to my soul, the former call to preach the gospel, or rather not to preach but to tell to those about me what the Lord had done for me, returned with redoubled power. It seemed to me to burn like fire in my bones that it was my duty, and that the Lord required at my hands, to exhort the people to seek the Lord their God, or be lost forever.” What an experience was his!

Twice before had he been led into the light, and twice had he been thrown back into the darkness. As by the providence of God he had been led forward, and was now again rescued, he henceforth acted as one chosen out of God, and to him alone accountable. In his own heart and life he was led to a profound appreciation of the great truths that it would be his mission to proclaim, and of those high spiritual ends that it would be his privilege and duty to seek. If at any time he felt discouraged in his work, he thought of the consequences of former disobedience, and feeling that his soul would be imperiled, addressed himself again to his work. He felt himself to be unworthy and without preparation; he had the care of a family; he had the management of a farm; he was already twenty-eight years of age; but when once in the field, there was henceforth with him no tiring or withdrawing until his earthly course was finished. What a contrast with this power of conviction in Newcomer we have, in our times, in the weakness of conviction that leaves to the ministry, to so great an extent, only those that are foot-loose, and those to whom worldly emoluments are closed! In better periods, the ministry has claimed the choice from the multitudes of converts. Mr. Newcomer's first public testimony was given while on a visit to

Pennsylvania, before a Mennonite congregation of his old friends and neighbors. He was himself much affected, and every one present was deeply touched. After this, he was frequently called upon "to exhort and speak in public," and lest he should lose his "peace of mind" he consented.

Newcomer was a man of commanding figure, keen visage, and was possessed of a voice moderately strong. He was not a great preacher, save in the concentration and pressure of purpose that never failed to make itself felt upon the heart and will. A natural impediment, sometimes manifesting itself in his speaking, caused Otterbein at one time to say that he felt as though he would like to help him. Yet Christian Newcomer occupied a place that no one but himself was able to fill.

The account of his connection with the movement under Otterbein will be given in his own words: "Already for a considerable time I had been acquainted with William Otterbein and George Adam Geeting, two preachers of the German Reformed Church,\* and had frequently heard them preach in the neighborhood of my

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\*The name German Reformed for Otterbein and Geeting, was, for that period, altogether proper. But even in this paragraph Newcomer takes up the distinctive beginnings of the religious movement and insensibly merges them in the church in which he lived and wrought, that church furnishing their proper interpretation, and being, in his mind, entitled to include its rudimentary elements.

place of residence. These individuals, endowed by God, preached powerfully, and not like the scribes. Their discourses made uncommon impressions on the hearts of the hearers. They insisted on the necessity of genuine repentance and conversion, on the knowledge of a pardon of sin, and in consequence thereof, a change of heart and renovation of spirit. Many secure and unconcerned sinners were by their instrumentality awakened from their sleep of sin and death, were converted from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God. They soon collected many adherents and followers of the doctrines that they preached, from the multitudes that congregated to hear them. Those persons that held to and embraced these doctrines were by them formed into societies, and were called Otterbein's People, but the worldly-minded gave them the nick-name Dutch Methodists, which, in those days, was considered slanderous. As these men preached the same doctrine that I had experienced, and which, according to my views and discernment, so perfectly agreed with the doctrine of Jesus Christ and his apostles, I associated with them and joined their society; and, blessed be God, although I withdrew myself from the Mennonite Society, on account of the want of the life and power of religion among them, I never

in any wise felt condemned for so doing. On the contrary, I have received many a blessing of God when assembled with my new brethren. The work of grace was now spreading very rapidly among the German population in the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania, and from every quarter resounded the call, ‘Come over and help us.’ The harvest was great and the laborers few. About this time it was frequently required of me by my brethren to attend meetings that were appointed by the people without my knowledge.”

The account given is of value as illustrating the stage of advancement that, at this early time, the revival-movement had reached; for the beginning of Newcomer’s preaching, as here referred to, dates from the year 1777. At the time to which the description applies, therefore, the Pietistic movement exclusively within the Reformed Church had ceased. All classes on turning from their sins were received into the now numerous “societies.” Newcomer became an addition to the preachers already in the field. The connection with the Mennonite wing in Pennsylvania was now renewed and formed into a perfect bond. Boehm’s expulsion, about this time, cut the last barrier that restrained him. With the close of the Revolutionary War the last impediments were removed.

Another record of the progress of the religious movement is to be found in the articles adopted January 1st, 1785, for Mr. Otterbein's church in Baltimore. In the fourteenth article reference is made to the "various churches in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia" that stood "under the superintendence of Wm. Otterbein." The fifteenth article refers to the "preachers and exhorters" already in the field.

The account of Rev. J. W. Runkle, as given in the "Fathers of the Reformed Church," gives evidence, furthermore, that Mr. Otterbein's work was not without its clashing with the representatives and methods of the Reformed Church. In 1787 Mr. Runkle expressed a regret that, when the congregation in Loudoun County, Virginia, desired to dispense with his services and secure those of the evangelical Weimer, already referred to as one of the "united ministers," Mr. Otterbein sided with the congregation. In 1790 and 1793 Runkle again complained that Mr. Otterbein and those holding his views sought to draw away "the religious portion" of his members.\*

Some space will now be claimed by formal meetings held by Mr. Otterbein and his co-labor-

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\* Dr. Harbaugh says that Runkle "most decidedly disapproved of the wild movement which, in his time, grew into the sect of the United Brethren in Christ, as well as of all Methodistic extravagance in general."

ers. It is said that from 1766\* the preachers engaged in the revival-work came together as often as once a year, generally at a great meeting, to consult over their work and to encourage one another. It is certain that for some years before 1789 there were meetings at which the attendance of the preachers was a special feature. The discipline of the United Brethren Church published in 1815 contains the following: "Several great meetings were appointed and held annually. On such occasions Mr. Otterbein would hold particular conversations with the preachers then present, and represent to them the importance of the ministry, and the necessity of their utmost endeavor to save souls. At one of these meetings it was resolved to hold a conference with all the preachers, in order to take into consideration in what manner they might be most useful." The conference referred to was held in 1789, in Baltimore, in Mr. Otterbein's parsonage, and laid the first formal basis for the United Brethren. First, an account will be given of the preachers co-operating with Mr. Otterbein, and then some account

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\* If the date 1766 has good historical foundation, the meeting at Isaac Long's would, with the greatest probability, belong to that particular year. The statement is in error as to some things, as for instance, in regard to the uninterrupted attendance of all the preachers. In its general character, or in some of its elements, however, the statement appears to be not without foundation.



of the proceedings, and the significance of the conference.

The members present were William Otterbein, Martin Boehm, George A. Gecting, Christian Newcomer, Henry Weidner, Adam Lehman, and John Ernst. The absent members were Benedict Schwope, Henry Baker, Simon Herre, Frederick Schaffer, Martin Crider, Christopher Grosh, and Abraham Troxel. Those already prominently introduced need not be noticed here.

Henry Weidner was born in Switzerland. His excellent talents had received fair cultivation. As early as 1785 he was an elder in Mr. Otterbein's church in Baltimore. He was a leader of one of the Baltimore "classes" in 1774, and was afterward licensed to preach by the "united ministers." He traveled and preached extensively. About 1790 he moved to Virginia. He ever remained dear to the heart of Mr. Otterbein. He died in 1811 near Baltimore.

Adam Lehman in 1774 lived on Sam's Creek, near the northern line of Frederick County, Maryland. While here he was one of the leaders of the Sam's Creek "class." At an early time there were many followers of Mr. Otterbein at this place. He afterward moved to near Frederick. Rev. Peter Kemp was his son-in-law. Mr. Lehman's preaching probably began about 1777. He died in 1823, aged ninety-one.

John Ernst began to preach prior to 1789, while living, as it seems, near the place of Martin Boehm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. About 1790 he began to preach at East Berlin, now in Adams County, and at other places. Mr. Otterbein, for a number of years, came regularly from Baltimore to administer the Lord's-supper to the people that he served. Mr. Ernst is claimed as having been a minister of the Reformed Church, but he does not appear to have been ordained by that church, or to have been at any time other than one of "Otterbein's preachers."\* He was a good man and an earnest and successful preacher. He died in 1804.

Benedict Schwope has already been referred to. At the time of the conference he was possibly already in Kentucky.

Henry Baker, at the time of the conference, was a member of Otterbein's vestry. Why his name does not occur in the list of members present is not explained. He afterward moved to Virginia, and still later to Tennessee, where he died at some time before 1812. He was a laborious and successful evangelist.

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\* "It is certain that he was not [connected with the synod] during the first few years of his ministry in York County, from the fact that the church at Holtzschwan \* \* \* was locked against him, on the very ground that he was not in connection with the synod, and that he belonged to what were called the 'Otterbein and Geeting People'—out of which grew the sect of the United Brethren in Christ."—Harbaugh.

Of Simon Herre (Herr) little is known beyond the fact that he was introduced into the ministry immediately by Otterbein, and that he was highly esteemed by him. He labored in Virginia, though he doubtless belonged to the Herrs of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and would therefore have been originally a Mennonite.

Frederick Schaffer was originally a member of the Reformed Church. He was a diligent laborer and an acceptable preacher. He had the distinguished honor of assisting Mr. Otterbein during the last days of the latter, of being one of the three formally ordained by him, and of filling his pulpit for several months after his death. He labored among the United Brethren until his death, which seems to have occurred about 1814.

Martin Crider has the distinction of having entered upon the work of preaching, after Otterbein and Boehm, the first among the ministers of the revival-movement. He must therefore have been already preaching in 1772. He was originally a Mennonite. His home was near Lebanon, Pennsylvania, where he died and was buried in 1826, at the age of eighty-six.

Christopher Grosh was of Moravian descent. His home was near New Holland, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. In many respects he was a superior man. He perceived the necessity of

organization and system in advance of many of his brethren. Immediately about him there was a small circle of evangelical preachers, not all of whom went so far as to directly connect themselves with the United Brethren. While he was in the fellowship of these men, he was also importantly connected with the rise and progress of the United Brethren. Those that knew well his work have asserted that the part that he performed has never been properly recognized. He died in 1829.

Abraham Troxel was of the Omish section of the Mennonites. He learned, however, to distinguish between the grace of God in the soul and the cut and fastenings of garments. He was born in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, in 1753. After being silenced by the Omish on account of his evangelical preaching, he became, in 1782, associated with the preachers of the revival-movement. For some time prior to 1804 he lived near the town of Lebanon. In 1804 he moved across the mountains to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. His home was about two miles from Mt. Pleasant. Living at this place he had the greatest influence in encouraging and helping the work in all the region beyond him. He died in 1825.

Undoubtedly to the names already given the

name of Leonard Harbaugh should be added. He was one of the original elders of Mr. Otterbein's church in Baltimore. He was a prominent architect, whose skill is spoken of by Griffith in his *Annals*. He was the leader of one of the Baltimore "classes" in 1774. In 1812 Mr. Asbury spoke of him as "once famous, gifted, laborious, useful." He then added, "He is now only a great mechanic, alas!"

While the above list does not include the names of all the preachers engaged in the religious movement among the Germans prior to 1789, it yet gives a comparatively clear and full view of the strength and character of the movement. There were numbered among those present five on the Reformed side and two on the Mennonite side. Among those absent there were four on the Reformed side, three on the Mennonite side, and there was one representative from the Moravians. The people represented by these ministers were, however, much more diverse in their original church-connections.

Having thus looked upon the preachers of this awakening among the Germans, we next inquire the reason for the conference of 1789, and in regard to the work done. Before this time the movement was under the direction of Otterbein and Boehm, not in any formal way, but because

it was to so large an extent a product of themselves, and because as yet it had no complete character apart from themselves. The following license, though bearing date of 1801, represents more strictly the period down to 1800, and is given here as showing the leading position held by Otterbein and Boehm:

We, the undersigned, hereby witness that David Snyder, in West Bans Fori Township, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, stands among us as a preacher of the gospel, by our consent. Given by us at Peter Kemp's, Frederick County Maryland, September, 24th, 1801.

W. OTTERBEIN, V. D. M.  
MARTIN BOEHM.

It was now necessary that the work should be given a basis of its own, that preachers and people should have a more conscious perception of their position and duties. The primary object of the conference was not to arrange work, but to settle its character. Otterbein and Boehm could have managed the work, and the laborers would have willingly submitted to their direction; but work thus dependent would have been in constant peril. The double object that it was desirable to accomplish was, to bring the work nearer to the leaders, and to throw upon their

co-workers a responsibility that they had not yet felt.

An important act of the conference was to adopt the following confession of faith:

In the name of God we declare and confess before all men, that we believe in the only true God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that these are one—the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father, and the Holy Ghost equal in essence or being with both; that this God created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is, visible as well as invisible, and furthermore sustains, governs, protects, and supports the same.

We believe in Jesus Christ; that he is very God and man, Savior and Redeemer of the whole world; that all men through him may be saved if they will; that this Jesus has suffered for us; that he died and was buried, rose on the third day, ascended into heaven, and that he will come again, at the last day, to judge the quick and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Ghost, that he proceeds from the Father and the Son; that we through him must be sanctified and receive faith, thereby being cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.

We believe that the Bible is the word of God; that it contains the true way to our salvation; that every true Christian is bound to acknowledge and receive it with the influence of the Spirit of God, as the only rule and guide; and that without

repentance, faith in Jesus Christ, forgiveness of sins, and following after Jesus Christ, no one can be a true Christian.

We also believe that what is contained in the Holy Scriptures—to-wit: the fall in Adam and redemption through Jesus Christ—shall be preached throughout the whole world.

We recommend that the outward signs and ordinances—namely, baptism and the remembrance of the Lord in the dispensing of the bread and wine,—be observed; also the washing of feet, when the same is desired.

The confession of faith down to toward the close seems to have been previously drawn up by Mr. Otterbein, and to have been in use in his congregation in Baltimore. The concluding part was doubtless added, and given a mild wording, in order that all might feel secure as to the possession of the ordinances according to their own conviction. The liberal views here indicated were not a new feature in the movement. The confession simply recognized the understanding that had been reached at the union at Isaac Long's. The Mennonites baptized by pouring, and held to feet-washing as an ordinance, while the Germans of all other classes differed from them in these and other respects. But under the melting and transforming power of the revival they found a common ground on which they could all stand



—not that of uniformity, but that of mutual forbearance and allowance.\*

The confession may be taken as a reflection of Mr. Otterbein's mind, and when regarded as a whole, it is simple and majestic. It impresses by what it includes, by what it omits, and by its doctrinal savor. It rests on the Apostles' Creed and the New Testament, and adds only those necessary specifications in regard to the application and mission of the gospel that even the simplest of the later creeds have been compelled to include. The closing part grew out of a particular exigency. The glory of the creed is that while Mr. Otterbein drew it together, he did not make it; that while he used old material, he appreciated every word and element that he employed, and that he was neither biased by obsolete forms nor by recent controversies. The creed might be called a working creed — a fit creed for a revival-people, whose defense is rather in the heart than in the armor.

At this conference there were also adopted rules

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\* It is not without some satisfaction that the correspondence may, at this time, be pointed out between these views and those expressed in the recently-discovered manuscript entitled "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." The words in the manuscript are: "And touching baptism, thus baptize: having first declared all these things, baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in living water. But if thou have not living water, baptize in other water; and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. But if thou have neither, pour on the head water thrice in the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit."

of discipline. The basis of these rules was the rules of Mr. Otterbein's church, as already given. The rules of 1789, along with the confession of faith, were ordered published in 1813. The rules were revised and adopted anew at the conference of 1814. The confession of faith and the rules of discipline were retained by the first general conference of the United Brethren in 1815. Mr. Spayth, one of the secretaries of that conference, speaks of the confession of faith of 1789 as the "same as in discipline." The minutes of the general conference of 1815 say, "The revision of the confession of faith and rules of discipline of the church was attended to, and with some small alterations the confession of faith and the rules of discipline were ordered printed." The revision of the confession consisted in the modification of some expressions, in the insertion of a single short article, and in giving a more definite statement as to the essential character of the ordinances, and as to liberty in the mode of observing the same. In 1825 there was an additional insertion of words, in regard to liberty in the manner of observing the ordinances, but the sense remained unchanged. The rules of discipline were adopted in spirit and substance rather than in form.

The second formal conference was held in 1791, at the house of Mr. John Spangler, eight miles

from York, Pennsylvania.\* There was no formal conference in 1790, or for a number of years after 1791. As has been already observed, the early conferences were not annual conferences for the purpose of arranging the year's work, but conferences to form a basis for action, and to secure intelligent and responsible work. The conference of 1791 seems rather to have confirmed and carried forward what was entered upon in 1789 than to have undertaken anything new.

The members recognized by the conference of 1791 were as follows: *Present*—Wm. Otterbein, Martin Boehm, George A. Geeting, Christian Newcomer, Adam Lehman, John Ernst, J. G. Pfrimmer, John Neidig, and Benedict Sanders. *Absent*—Henry Weidner, Henry Baker, Martin Crider, F. Schaffer, Christopher Grosh, Abraham Troxel, Christian Crum, G. Fortenbach, D. Strickler, J. Hershey, Simon Herre, J. Hautz, and Benedict Schwope.

Of a few of the new preachers an account will be given. John George Pfrimmer, one of the most talented and successful of Mr. Otterbein's co-laborers, was born in Alsace, an old French

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\* Mr. Spangler was a large land-holder and a substantial citizen. In church-connection the family were Reformed. The house in which the conference was held is still standing, though no longer used as a dwelling. Mr. Otterbein and his co-laborers won their way to the most substantial and best-to-do people; but at the same time they neither shrunk nor despaired in the face of the greatest wretchedness and degradation.

province, at present a part of the German empire, July 24th, 1762, and came to Pennsylvania in 1788. He had been well educated. Not long after his arrival in this country he was awakened and converted under the influence of the widespread religious movement whose history we have been following. He soon felt himself called to preach, and in 1790 entered upon the work. First in eastern Pennsylvania, then in the Susquehanna valley, and as early as 1800 west of the Alleghanies, he preached with rare diligence, power, and success. After 1800 there was some alienation between him and the other preachers, apparently in consequence of the half-and-half relation that he sustained, for a time, to the Reformed Church. His earnestness and devotion to the same work in which they were engaged, however, soon again made him one with them. In 1807 he made a visit to Indiana, and in 1808 he settled in Harrison County of that territory, a few miles southeast of Corydon. From 1809 to 1811 he was associate judge of the court, in Harrison County. He early became an important member of Miami Conference. He was formally ordained in 1815. As a result of his labors a church was built in 1818 in his neighborhood, on ground owned by his son. It was the first United Brethren church built west of the Ohio. He likewise formed the

first United Brethren class in Indiana. Through his foresight and extraordinary energy he contributed greatly to the establishment of the work in the West. The hero in many toils and the victor in many conflicts, he ended his labors with his life in 1825.

John Neidig was born in Berks County, Pennsylvania, in 1765. Soon afterward his father moved to the neighborhood of Harrisburg. He was brought up in the Mennonite Church. When in his twenty-fifth year, he was chosen by the lot to be a preacher. He was naturally serious, and previously to his selection he had been seeking and praying for a clean heart. He felt burdened with the responsibility of the ministerial office. When he obtained the divine blessing, and when his spiritual eyes were opened, he declared evangelical truth with such pointedness and force that his Mennonite brethren would no longer tolerate him. Thus he was led to present himself for membership at the conference of 1791. Mr. Spayth gives the following description of him:

“Among all the brethren yet noticed, or hereafter to be noticed, Brother Neidig was the Nathaniel. He possessed an excellent spirit,—meek, gentle, just. Of them that were without, he had a good report. The virtues and graces requisite in an elder in the church of God were

all exhibited in his character; and the clear light of his beautiful and holy life, which shed a luster along his pathway, was never extinguished, nor even suffered a momentary eclipse. As a preacher, he was able by sound doctrine to exhort and convince the gainsayers. His language was select and chaste, and his manner inimitable."

He was faithful in his attendance at the conferences, and was abundant in ministerial labors. He died in 1844.

Christian and Henry Crum, twin brothers, were brought up not far from Frederick City, Maryland. Their parents belonged to the Reformed Church. They were earnest, holy men, and both became itinerants. Their homes were subsequently in Virginia. Henry, however, was not a preacher in 1791. Christian labored extensively, and was acceptable and useful as a preacher. He was highly esteemed by Mr. Otterbein, who, toward the close of his life, made him a present of his Bible and hymn-book, which are still preserved.\* He died in 1823.

John Hershey was of Mennonite descent. He lived at Hagerstown, Maryland. While he did not preach as constantly as some, he was yet a pillar in his community, and was generally in his place in the conferences.

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\* In the library of Otterbein University.

Though for a time after 1791 there were no formal conferences, the ministers yet frequently met at great meetings, and, under the superintendency of Otterbein and Boehm, new men were licensed, and the work was carried forward with increasing success. George Benedum, forty-three years in the ministry, preaching first in Pennsylvania and afterward in Ohio, began to preach in 1794. Jacob Baulus, preaching the gospel first in Maryland and then in Ohio, through a period of fifty-six years, was licensed in 1795. Abraham Mayer, whose home was in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, was for thirty years a monument of faithfulness. He began his ministry in 1796. Even the administering of the ordinances was conceded, on a cautious plan, to suitable ones among the preachers.

To indicate the nature and extent of the work that Mr. Otterbein's labors had been the chief instrument in setting in motion, and that he was now occupied in directing and watching over, a few extracts from Christian Newcomer's journal will be introduced. Of course it is Newcomer himself whom we shall follow. The following is the first entry in the journal.

"1795. October 27th. This morning I left home; rode through Mercersburg to Spruce Creek, where I stayed for the night.—28th. This morn-

ing I am well by the mercy of God, and willing to do and suffer all things that the hand of my Maker shall lay on me. I had rather a restless night, and when endeavoring to raise my thoughts to God, my mind was diverted so that I had but a small share of the spirit of prayer. Oh, what an impatient and unfit creature I am! Oh, the weakness and poverty of spirit! \* \* \*—29th. This day I traveled all the day long. About dusk, the path I rode led me up a tolerably high mountain. The ascent was very steep. I therefore got from my horse and drove him before me. Presently he commenced ascending at such a gate that I was unable to follow. By this time it had become dark, and I had lost all sight of him; but, blessed be God, on the top of the mountain I found him waiting for me.”

The next extract indicates the appointments included within what he calls his “circuit.” At some of the places single appointments were made by special request of the people, or at his own convenience in making his trips. Other places were served regularly. The different preachers at this time had circuits about their own homes, which they served from year to year. The following is the extract:

“1795. December 11th. This morning I set out again from my home for the circuit, and spoke at



the first appointment from John iii. 14, and at Virumbach's, in Virginia, at candle-light; the 15th at Frederick Kemp's, from II. Peter i. 5-7; 16th at Liberty, from John iii. 14-18; 17th at Bishop's, in the forenoon from Luke xvii. 12-19, in the evening, at a school-house, from Romans i. 5; on the 18th at Shryack's, from John iii. 14; 19th at Degis's, from Luke xvii. 14; 20th at Emmitsburg, from Psalms i. 1; 21st at Harbaugh's; 22d at Christian King's, from Psalms i. 5-7; 23d, returned home."

These appointments were situated in three different states, and yet they only made up about one third of his circuit. It was a part of his work, also, in company with Geeting and others, frequently to visit the fields that were occupied by other preachers, or that were without regular preaching. Along the line of these trips several great meetings would be held. The following extract gives an account of a section of one of these trips:

"1796. April 16th. I left home for Pennsylvania.—17th. I was at a place called Turkey; 18th, at the Monocacy.—19th. Held a meeting in the forenoon in what is called Paradise;\* and in the evening at Strickler's.† Here we had a two-days' meeting, on the 20th and 21st. Administered the

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\* John Spangler's, in York County. † Lancaster County.

sacrament of the Lord's-supper. Blessed be the Lord for all his mercies. I preached in the evening at Strasburg.—22d. I had an appointment at Mr. S.'s.—23d, 24th, and 25th, we had a sacramental meeting at Sinking Springs.\* I preached the first day from the ninth psalm. Glory be to God, it was a blessed time.—26th. This day I came in company with Brother Geeting to what is called Berner's Church, but we were not permitted to preach therein. So Brother Geeting spoke in the grave-yard adjoining the church, to a numerous congregation, with remarkable power.—27th. We held a meeting at a place called the Black Ridge Church. Here we were also refused permission to preach in the church, and Brother Geeting spoke in the school-house adjoining.—28th. I preached at Mr. S.'s, from Psalms xxxiv. 15.—29th. Our appointment was at a church called Pibob's. Brother Geeting spoke in the forenoon, and I in the afternoon from John iii. 14.—30th. This day our quarterly meeting commenced at Brother Troxel's. I made the beginning by speaking from Luke xi. 21 and 22.—May 1. This forenoon Brother Geeting preached from the forty-seventh psalm. In the afternoon Brother Boehm gave an interesting discourse from these words:

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\* Berks County.

“The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

A few extracts will now be given indicating something of the general work of Mr. Boehm and others:

“1800. August 30. This forenoon Father Boehm preached in Hauser’s Meeting-house. His son Henry spoke after him. In the afternoon they spoke at Geeting’s Meeting-house. We tarried together at Hess’s.—Sept. 1st. This morning my soul is particularly drawn out in secret prayer, for sanctifying grace. O Lord, sanctify me wholly and cleanse me from all sin, for Jesus’ sake. We set out for Virginia, and came to Christian Crum’s, where we stayed for the night.—2d. This day a great congregation was assembled here. Father Boehm preached first. I followed him. The Friend of sinners was present at the meeting. At night we held a meeting at Dr. Senseny’s, in Winchester. Father Boehm preached with great power. A Methodist brother spoke after him in the English language. I stayed for the night with Mr. Lauck.—4th. This day we had a meeting at Abraham Niswander’s. The people were very attentive. I trust some good was done. We rode to a Mr. A. Boehm’s. I preached here from Heb. xii. 15. Henry Boehm followed me.—5th. This forenoon we held a meeting at Jacob Funk-

houser's. Rodé thence to Woodstock. \* \* \* —  
11th. This day a great many people collected from far and near. I preached from Acts xiv. 22. Father Boehm followed me. He had not spoken long when quite unexpectedly several persons rose simultaneously to their feet, clapping and striking their hands, and with an ecstasy of joy shouting and praising God. At night we held meeting again, which lasted till past midnight. The house could not contain all the people that assembled. Father Boehm baptized young Daniel Strickler and his companion.—12th. This day we rode to Peter Biber's, in Augusta County. \* \* \* —  
20th. This day a sacramental meeting commenced at Abraham Niswander's. Very suitable accommodations were made under the open canopy of heaven. I preached first, from Luke xxiv. 46 and 47. Brother Crum followed me. At night I preached at Senseny's, from the words, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Met the class and had a very good time.—21st. This day a vast multitude of people was collected. Father Boehm delivered the first discourse. Some other brother followed him; but it appeared to me as if the power of darkness hovered over the assembly. The word spoken had not the desired effect. In the afternoon I preached from II. Peter i. 19, with considerable liberty. Henry Boehm followed

me. \* \* \*—23d. To-day we had meeting at Hauser's, where we met Brother Pfrimmer. Thence reached home."

Many entries like the following occur: "1799. June 1st. To-day a sacramental meeting commenced at Brother Isaac Long's. On our arrival at the place appointed we found Brothers Boehm, Pfrimmer, Neidig, Grosh, Crider, and Shuey. Brother Pfrimmer commenced the meeting. Other brethren spoke after him. At night we had a happy meeting at Abraham Hershey's."

Thus we have accounts of a field extending from Berks County in Pennsylvania to Augusta County in Virginia, and from Baltimore, Maryland, to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, which Newcomer visited in 1799.

We will now notice, through the aid of Newcomer's journal, some of the instances in which Mr. Otterbein's presence and labors were afforded. It will be sufficient, for the most part, to refer to some of the great meetings\* at Antietam,† which

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\*The great meetings were sometimes held in groves, yet they were not camp-meetings. Sometimes they were held in barns and sometimes in private houses. The meetings were called great meetings, quarterly meetings, sacramental meetings, and two-days' meetings, according to the accidents belonging to them. They did not have the form of our protracted meetings, yet they served the same purpose. They seldom exceeded two or three days in duration.

†This was at the home of Geeting, in Washington County, Maryland. Geeting lived on the Little Antietam, about a mile from where it empties into the Large Antietam. It was near by, on the Large Antietam, that the battle of Antietam, in the late war, was fought.

were always held at Whitsuntide, and which he almost invariably attended.

“1797. June 3d. This day the sacramental meeting commenced at or near the Antietam. Even at the beginning the Lord was present in power. In the evening we held a prayer-meeting at brother Samuel Baker’s. Several brethren from Baltimore were present. We had an excellent time.—4th, Sunday. This afternoon William Otterbein preached from Eph. ii. 1–6. Oh, how conclusively did he reason! How did he endeavor to persuade his hearers to work out the salvation of their souls! How did he endeavor to convince all of the necessity of vital, experimental religion, and a thorough change of heart! The congregation of people was unusually large, and all seemed to pay the most profound attention. Poor unworthy me had to exhort after him. Then Otterbein and Geeting administered the Lord’s-supper. Brother Troxel preached in the afternoon.—5th. This day we had an exceedingly glorious time. A great number, both of males and females, young people and hoary-headed sinners, were convicted, and some happily converted to God.”

“1798. May 26th and 27th we had a sacramental meeting at the Antietam. Brothers Otterbein, Geeting, Grosh, Senseny, and myself were present. Honor and praise be to God for all his mercies. It surely was a warm time.”

“1799. May 11th. I attended a sacramental meeting at the Antietam. Wm. Otterbein delivered the first discourse. Oh, what a wonderful man he is to preach and declare the counsel of God.—12th. This morning we had our love-feast, or professing meeting. Wm. Otterbein preached again with such power and unction from on high that all present were very much astonished. O Lord, grant that the word spoken may bring forth fruit unto eternal life. Otterbein and Geeting administered the sacrament, and we had a blessed time on the occasion.”

“1799. September 27th. Rode to Peter Kemp’s, where I was rejoiced to see Father William Otterbein. Several neighbors collected in the evening, and we had a delightful little meeting.—28th. This morning we set off together for a two-days’ meeting at Mr. J. D. Bishop’s, on Fishing Creek. Father Otterbein preached first, then John Neidig. We had a blessed time.—Sunday 29th. This day an extraordinary number of people attended the meeting. Otterbein preached with great energy and power; so did some of the other brethren.

“1800. May 31st. To-day I set out for the quarterly or great meeting, as it is generally called, at the Antietam. Father Otterbein was there and preached first, from Psalms cxviii. 22—

25. At night I spoke from Acts xiv. 22.—Sunday, June 1st. This morning we had our love-feast. On account of a heavy rain we could not have public preaching, as usual, under the trees. The meeting-house could not hold half the people collected. Preparations were quickly made to accommodate them in the barn of old Jacob Hess. Otterbein spoke first; I spoke after him. He and Brother Geeting distributed the bread and wine. The hearts of many believers and spectators were tendered. \* \* \*—3d. To-day I arrived at Peter Kemp's, where I found Father Otterbein. Some people were collected. I had to preach and he spoke after me.—4th. This day we had a meeting at Fishing Creek. Otterbein preached with wonderful power.”

Not all that were present at these Antietam meetings, at which Otterbein was present, have even at this time gone to their long home. The writer last year heard from living lips the account of these glorious seasons. The children were told to hurry and get their work done, as there was to be a great meeting and Father Otterbein was coming. When, from any cause, the meeting was to be held in the church, the children were left at home, to give room for older people. Frequently the people would be divided up and meetings would be held at three different places. At this



time Otterbein was quite old, and as he was quite bald, he wore his study-cap under his hat, and when sitting on the platform in the grove he would remove his hat, but still wear the cap. On rising to speak, however, he took off the cap, and is still remembered as sometimes hanging it on the branch of an overhanging tree.\* The great power and sweetness of the gospel as it fell from the lips of Geeting is also a cherished memory. Down to the present time, the great meetings at Antietam, now Keedysville, though modified somewhat of late, have been regularly held.

Mr. Otterbein made frequent visits to different places in Pennsylvania and Virginia, as well as in Maryland. Even before 1800 he established Sunday-schools and prayer-meetings in connection with these extended labors. When he was absent from Baltimore on his preaching-tours his place was filled by some one of the preachers already prominently mentioned.

While he did not find a place in the Reformed Church for the work that he felt himself called to do, and while he met with great oppositions and trials from that source, he was not without friends and sympathizers in that church. On his part, he not only returned the measure of sympa-

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\*At a still later time he kept the study-cap on while preaching, even when preaching in his church. There are yet living instances of this custom.

thy received, but continued to love and seek to benefit those that resisted his desires and efforts. At different times he showed his Christian spirit, and his love for his ancestral church, by declaring the gospel, when opportunities were afforded him, from Reformed pulpits, and by affording his presence on various occasions. In 1796, at the laying of the corner-stone of the Second-Street Reformed Church, after a sermon by the pastor, Rev. Trolde-nier, whom Otterbein esteemed, the latter made a short address. At the funeral of this minister, in 1800, Mr. Otterbein took part. Other similar occasions could be named. His part, however, was much the same as that of Mr. Kurtz, the Lutheran minister in Baltimore, who participated at different times in the same meetings. When in 1818 Dr. Becker, the Reformed pastor in Baltimore, died, Rev. John Snyder, a successor of Mr. Otterbein, took part in the funeral exercises.

Mr. Otterbein's relations to Mr. Asbury and the Methodists continued as in the first place they began. Mr. Asbury often preached in his church. At the Methodist general conference of 1792, the great three-days' debate in regard to Asbury's powers in stationing the preachers was brought to a close at an evening session in his church. In 1786 Mr. Asbury made the following note in his journal: "I called on Mr. Otterbein. We had

some free conversation on the necessity of forming a church among the Dutch, holding conferences, the order of its government, and so forth." The conversation on a "plan of church-discipline," already referred to, had reference to the local church at Baltimore, and its more immediate surroundings. The present conversation meant much more. Mr. Otterbein, though freely conversing with Mr. Asbury on this important subject, was far from passive to the influence of others. Mr. Schwope and Mr. Weidner, as well as Mr. Asbury, urged Mr. Otterbein to copy from the Methodist plan; but Mr. Otterbein moved slowly, and sought to read for himself the divine will. This conversation was three years before the conference of 1789.

The aim of the present chapter has been to cause Mr. Otterbein to stand forth in his own actual environment. It will generally be conceded that, when a man creates largely the elements that make his sphere what it is, these are closely enough connected with his immediate self to deserve a recognition in an account of his life.


The history of Mr. Otterbein's life has now been traced, in most regards, down to the fall of 1800. We have followed him through years of toil and agonizing labor, and yet it scarcely dawns upon us that he is wearing out in the work—that

he is even now a veteran. The fact of his diminished power to labor and endure is seen in the following entry, for the year 1797, in the Baltimore church-book: "Wm. Otterbein saw fit to be assisted by two elders. He chose Philip Bier and Christian Matioth." Of the three original elders, two had removed from Baltimore, and their places seem not to have been filled. Peter Hoffman still held his place. The choosing, in 1797, of the two elders meant more than the filling of vacant places. It meant that the services of elders were needed, in view of Mr. Otterbein's weight of years and the necessary demands from abroad, to relieve, as much as possible, his pastoral burden. But we must not think that his lease of life and labor was at the point of expiring.

## CHAPTER XII.

### OTTERBEIN AND THE REFORMED CHURCH.

Want of Congeniality—Growing Alienation—Condition of the German Churches—Various Testimonies—Facts in General—Why some Misunderstood Otterbein—Otterbein's Twofold Relation—Relation on the Reformed Side Vanishing—An Incident—Geeting's Expulsion—Synod of 1806—Another Incident—Contrary Testimonies Examined—Winters' Testimony—Aurandt's Testimony—The two Relations Incompatible—The Responsibility—Statements of Dr. Benjamin Kurtz, Bishop Asbury, and Dr. Zacharias.

T seems necessary, at this point, that we look with some carefulness into Mr. Otterbein's relations to the Reformed Church. From the time that he attained unto a full evangelical experience, during his period at Lancaster, he met, in his endeavors to reach true spiritual results in his ministry, with difficulties and discouragements in the different congregations that he served. After his co-operation with converted ministers outside of the Reformed Church, he lost sympathy in the ranks of the Reformed ministry. When he went to Baltimore, his relations became decidedly anomalous. Though he continued a member of the cœtus, he served a

congregation whose fundamental character was that of independence of the Reformed cœtus, and whose spirit and methods were utterly unlike anything existing in the German Reformed Church. His efforts, already spoken of, to infuse more of an evangelical spirit into the cœtus would not regain or increase to him the good-will of the Reformed ministry.

As early as 1772, through his immediate agency, laymen were brought into the work of preaching, and after the war of the Revolution these lay preachers were brought into close co-operation with other preachers that had been led into the field as the result of the meeting that took place at Isaac Long's. Meantime new accessions had been made to the preaching force. Otterbein and Boehm were the leaders. In 1786 Mr. Otterbein had reached a point at which he was ready to engage in a "free conversation" as to the necessity of forming a church among the Germans. His great aims were to secure the conversion of the people and to build up a spiritual church-membership. The methods that he used and encouraged with a view to the accomplishment of these ends, including the employment of zealous and capable converts in preaching, and the introduction of the class-system into every community where there were awakened and con-

verted people, were the occasion of his conflicts and trials.

It would be pleasant indeed to suppose that he did not, in so good a work, meet with these oppositions; but devout, retiring, conciliatory man that he was, with none of those elements that mark men that desire to rule, or head a party, how could we account, except on the ground of the most serious opposition, for even his slightest and most temporary separations from those in whose fellowship he had been laboring.

The condition of the German churches, as described by writers in those churches themselves, was sufficiently deplorable. Dr. Helfenstein, of the Reformed Church, gives the following incident, which indicates the way in which revivals were regarded:

“In the year 1790, my father, minister in Germantown, departed this life. An invitation was sent to Rev. Anthony Hautz to visit that church. He did so. They gave him a call. He accepted it, returned home, and shortly afterward gave them notice that he declined it. The reason he gave was, that if the Rev. Helfenstein had his difficulties in the congregation, how could he be able to manage them? The difficulties were the prayer-meetings that were at that time introduced into the congregation. There was then a great revival

in the church. Numbers were awakened, and met together in prayer-meetings. To this there was great opposition, and much commotion was caused in the congregation."

Dr. Nevin, of the same church, in his twenty-eighth lecture on the Heidelberg Catechism, published in 1842, gives the following statements in regard to the early condition of the Reformed Church: "To be confirmed and then to take the sacrament occasionally was counted by the multitude all that was necessary to make one a good Christian, if only a tolerable decency of outward life were maintained besides, without any regard at all to the religion of the heart. True, serious piety was indeed often treated with open and marked scorn. In the bosom of the church itself it was stigmatized as *Schwaermerei*, *Kopfhaengeri*,\* or miserable driveling Methodism. The idea of the new birth was treated as a Pietistic whimery. Experimental religion, in all its forms, was eschewed as a new-fangled invention of cunning impostors, brought in to turn the heads of the weak, and to lead captive silly women. Prayer-meetings were held to be a spiritual abomination. Family worship was a species of saintly affectation, barely tolerable in the case of minis-

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\* Favorite epithets were "*Strabblers*" and "*Knierutscher*," the latter being applied to Otterbein's Baltimore congregation.



ters (though many of them gloried in having no altar in their houses), but absolutely disgraceful for common Christians. To show an awakened concern on the subject of religion, a disposition to call on God in daily secret prayer, was to incur certain reproach. \* \* \* The picture, it must be acknowledged, is dark, but not more so than the truth of history would seem to require."

The above description was not given in the interest of "sects," as further statements in the same lecture show. After speaking of the losses from the German Reformed Church to the Presbyterians and others, Dr. Nevin says, "With the vast inroads that have been made on our territory by ranting and fanatical sects, of different names, we have less reason to be pleased. Specially noticeable under this character are two forms of religious exorbitation that started forth originally from the Reformed Church itself, and have since acquired very considerable volume, made up in great measure of German material, though not all gathered from the Reformed connection. Otterbein of Baltimore, at a comparatively early period (1789), became the founder of one of these organizations. In the first instance, he was a good man who seems to have been driven into a false position by the cold, dead temper that he found generally prevalent in the regular church." He then speaks of the movement begun by Wine-

brenner as originating "with less purity of intention."

Dr. Benjamin Kurtz, of the Lutheran Church, in the *Lutheran Observer* of January 12th, 1855, says, "Some thirty-five years ago, when God in his mercy sanctioned our labors with a glorious outpouring of his Spirit, and for the first time in our ministry granted us a mighty revival, the opposition of the world and the devil was almost unparalleled. A revival in the Lutheran Church was a new thing in that day. We had never heard of but one, and that was in Bro. Reck's church in Winchester, Virginia. He can testify to the bitterness, malevolence, and awful wickedness that characterized the adversaries of such divine visitations, in those days of ignorance, hardness of heart, and spiritual blindness."

The slowness to understand and to fall in with what some truly saw to be the duty of the hour, is not the reproach of the German churches alone, but is to be set down to the blindness of all the old churches of the period.\* The Congregation-

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\* Many of the representatives of these old churches are now commendably active in revival-work; and the tenacity with which they adhere to Bible truth in forming anew the divine impress upon the heart, and their unswerving application of biblical rule to spiritual experience and outward life will do much to protract the day of revivals down to the distant future. These things being thus, would it not be sad if those that call themselves in a special sense the children of Otterbein should now allow themselves to be outstripped in the work of gathering the spiritual harvest?

alists honor Jonathan Edwards, but they do not seek to extenuate the treatment that he received. The cause of his difficulties, too, was, in a large sense, his views of church-membership and his connection with revivals. In the Presbyterian Church, the Tennants were "secretly despised by the synod generally;" and in 1741 the synod wrote, "We excluded the four Tennants, Blair, and others." Mr. Erskine was "hated" in the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. Yet to-day the Presbyterian Church records all of these names in the lists of her worthies. The Episcopal Church of England acknowledges the mistreatment that it so liberally bestowed upon John Wesley. Joseph Cook says that the great contribution that American Christianity has made to the churches of Europe is the presenting of a method for efficient revival-work. Europe perhaps thinks that it cost America nothing to develop and mature such a plan.

Some in the Reformed ministry sympathized with Mr. Otterbein and his work. Others, who themselves may have been good men, doubted the propriety of the methods used by him, and perhaps had their doubts as to the character of the results attained. Connected with the very highest efforts and highest products of Christianity there have been specious counterfeits and serious

abuses. Ages of spiritual quickening have also been ages of imposture and grotesque combinations. But these developments do not condemn such quickenings themselves. Luther said to some that had suddenly outgrown the conditions of healthful spiritual life, and that alleged the Spirit as their guide, "I slap your *spirit* on the snout." The language was not particularly severe for Luther to use, and not too severe to be applied to some people in more recent times. John Wesley, when troubled by the caprice of those that took their own uncertain impulses for the Spirit's promptings, and whom he called mystics, using the term mystic in its least favorable sense, spoke as follows: "All other enemies of Christianity are triflers; the mystics are the most dangerous. They stab it in the vitals, and its most serious professors are most likely to fall by them." Asbury said that "diabolical impressions may sometimes resemble those made by the Spirit of God," and that "all impressions, dreams, visions, and so forth, should be brought to the standard of the Holy Scriptures, and if they do not perfectly correspond therewith, they should be rejected." Mr. Otterbein recognized these perils as clearly as any one, and sought the authorization, producing cause, and rule for spiritual exercises beyond and far above the deceitful

sphere of the human heart. Some of his fellow ministers did not care to understand his aims, or the necessity and warrant for his measures. They only knew that his zeal reproached their indolence, and his spiritual preaching their formal notions.

Our affirming or denying in regard to Mr. Otterbein and his co-laborers forming a church at the conference of 1789 depends much on the notion that we have of what constitutes a church. The preaching of God's word in an evangelical sense, the administering of the ordinances, and the exercise of discipline, the marks by which some identify a church, were certainly not wanting. A confession of faith, the perpetuation of the ministry, and the perpetuation of a class of ministers authorized to administer the sacraments would seem to supply anything that might be required in order to make a valid case. An evidence that seems to be against the idea of a church thus and at that time formed is the fact that Mr. Otterbein's name appears in the lists of those present at the sessions of the Reformed synod in 1791, 1797, 1800, and 1806. Of the nature of his attendance in 1791, 1797, and 1800 we know little. In regard to his attendance in 1806, we know that his name ought not to be included. Not taking into account this instance, then, his attendance at

the sessions of the synod in the last twenty-three years of his life would stand, present three times during the first ten years, and during the last thirteen years, or after the important United Brethren conference of 1800, never present. It seems, however, that Mr. Otterbein did sustain a double relation. As to which relation was the nominal one, only now and then rising to something like reality, and which relation was the virtual one, only now and then confronted by apparent contradiction, the entire chain of events hereafter described will indicate.

After Mr. Otterbein became pastor of an independent congregation he could at no time, in a practical sense, be considered a full member of the synod; but the extent to which he continued his connection was, as an incident or two will show, a matter of offense to his opponents in the synod. At a comparatively early time, as a Mr. G. was returning from a session of the synod, he was met by one of his parishioners, a bitter enemy of revivals, when the following conversation passed:

P. "Well, what have you done with Mr. O.?"

S. "Oh, nothing—nothing at all."

P. "Nothing! Why did you not throw him over the fence?"

S. "Ah! he was too heavy for us."

We now come to the expulsion of Mr. Geeting in 1804. Mr. Geeting had not been present at the synod since 1797. On motion of Rev. Christian L. Becker that he be expelled from the synod "without delay," he was forthwith expelled. His offense was the same as Mr. Otterbein's—not greater, not different. Mr. Otterbein paid no respect to the action of the synod. At the session of the United Brethren conference in the fall of 1804, after this expulsion took place, Otterbein and Geeting were both absent on account of the prevailing "great sickness and mortality." In 1805 they were together at the conference, and subsequently their relations were close and unbroken. While their spheres of work were somewhat different, and while, in slight respects they may have differed in the character of their work, Mr. Otterbein's approval was ever upon the zeal and labors of Mr. Geeting.

The list of ministers present at the session of the synod of 1806 includes, without good reason, as already said, the name of Mr. Otterbein. Notwithstanding the synod that year met in Baltimore, Mr. Otterbein did not present himself at the session until requested to do so by a special committee. The account of this last visit to the synod, as given by Mr. Lawrence, is as follows:

"Bending under the weight of four-score years,

and leaning upon a long staff, which he carried to support him, he went with the committee. When he arrived, an opportunity was given him to speak. He arose and addressed the synod in a most feeling manner, and strove to impress the minds of the ministers present with the importance of experimental religion,—of the new birth, and the great necessity of preaching it to the people distinctly and plainly, as men who must give account to God. After he had taken his seat, Mr. Becker, who, about that time, assumed the pastoral charge of the German Reformed church in Baltimore, arose and opposed the views he had advanced, and answered him roughly. Mr. O. heard him through with his accustomed meekness, and then, taking his cane and hat, he bid the preachers farewell, bowed, and retired never to return again.” His last words to the members of the synod were, “Good-by, brethren (*Adieu,\* Brueder*).”

Following upon this scene on the floor of the synod, either in 1806 or 1807, we have the following occurrence and conversation: In company with a Mr. Schwatkee, a member of his vestry, Mr. Otterbein was on a visit to Old Town. While in the Falls bridge they met Rev. Christian L. Becker, who after offering Mr. Otterbein some

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\*Not the English, but the French pronunciation—*ad-yâ*.



cold civilities, interrogated him thus: "Will you persist in your conduct, holding *schwaermer versammlungen* (fanatical meetings)? Mr. Otterbein meekly replied that he would continue his course. Becker continued, "The synod will certainly exclude you. I am determined to have you expelled. We can not suffer such wicked fanaticism among us." (*Wir koennen solche heilose Schwaermerci unter uns nicht dulden.*) Otterbein replied, "The synod is too late; the exclusion is past." As they separated Otterbein exclaimed, "*O welche Blindheit*,—Oh what blindness!"

The testimony most relied on to show that Mr. Otterbein's full connection with the German Reformed Church was unbroken from first to last is that of Thomas Winters, a minister that was at first associated with Mr. Otterbein and his co-laborers, and that afterward became a regular minister in the Reformed Church. Let us notice his testimony. The following is an extract from his testimony as taken down a few years before his death, which occurred in 1863, by Rev. P. C. Prugh, "at the special request of Dr. Harbaugh." "During this time [between 1809 and 1814] I was strongly urged to go into the organization of a new church, called the United Brethren in Christ, which was then in process of formation, and which did actually come into being; but like

the great Otterbein whom I greatly loved and esteemed for his piety and talents, I preferred rather to live and die in the Reformed Church."

If Mr. Winters' relations before 1814 were the same as those of Mr. Otterbein, it will be of interest to find out what those relations were. In 1799 Mr. Winters received from Mr. Otterbein and his co-laborers license to preach. He continued to preach in Maryland on the authority of this license until 1809, when he became settled in Ohio. Here his zeal and diligence continued undiminished. When the first United Brethren conference was formed in Ohio, in 1810, he was a member of it, and was present at the first session. In 1812 he was one of those that "willingly gave themselves to travel." The same year he and Daniel Troyer were sent as fraternal delegates to the Methodist conference at Chillicothe. In 1813 he and Henry Evinger reported that they had formed a "circuit consisting of forty-seven appointments, and that many other places requested preaching." He received as salary one hundred and thirty-two dollars and six cents, besides a small dividend from two other sources, with a slight "advance" payment. During the first part of the next year he and Mr. Evinger again labored on "Twin Circuit," and during this time made considerable progress in collecting a volume of German hymns

for the use of the United Brethren. In the spring of 1814 he made a visit to Maryland, and was present at the session of the old United Brethren conference, which met May 24th of that year. It was at this session that the Baltimore congregation made its report of the death of Mr. Otterbein, and at which his first regular successor was appointed. After Mr. Winters had completed his visit in Maryland he returned to Ohio, and was present at the conference that met August 23d, at Andrew Zeller's, near Germantown. From some cause he had determined to seek admission to the ministry of the German Reformed Church. The minutes of the conference of 1814 say, "Brother Winters declared that he, from this time forth, would not belong to the brotherhood,\* and was dismissed (*entlassen*)."

To most persons it will be sufficiently apparent that in 1814 Mr. Winters made a radical change from the course that he had hitherto pursued.

Mr. John Dietrich Aurandt, who received license in the same way as did Mr. Winters, and about the same time, is likewise often referred to as indicating by his course the relations of Mr. Otterbein. What, then, was his course? In 1800

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\* The word church, even at this day, does not form a part of the name of the United Brethren in Christ. The term is also wanting in the names of some other denominations.

he was present at the conference of the United Brethren. In 1801 he sought "examination and ordination of the Reformed synod." Hereupon the synod, among other directions, directed that he should abstain from "attending on the so-called 'big meetings.'" He seemed reluctant to make the separation required of him, and was again present at the conference of 1802. On the authority of his license, he continued to preach for some time; but in 1806 he again made application to the synod, and received license for one year. But while the synod was dissatisfied with him on account of his connection with the United Brethren, the conference of the United Brethren was no less dissatisfied with him because of his course before the synod. The minutes of the conference of 1803, which were signed by Mr. Otterbein, contain the following: "Complaints were presented against D. Aurandt. Brothers Snyder and Neidig were appointed to investigate the matter." The conference of 1807 declared that "for the present" they would "have nothing to do with Dietrich Aurandt." It was during this same period that the conference resolved to have nothing to do with J. G. Pfrimmer, whose relations to the German Reformed Church were similar to those of Mr. Aurandt, though Mr. Pfrimmer "again received permission to preach" from the conference of 1805.

From these facts it is apparent that even at this early day the double relation that before 1789 or 1800 was entered into on the one side and connived at on the other came to be looked upon as in itself incompatible. If Mr. Otterbein and those that with him had stood in the Reformed Church were unfaithful to the true mission and demands of the church, they should be held responsible. If the Reformed Church, as represented by its synod, had been unfaithful to the mission of the church and the call of the hour, it should bear its responsibility. Whatever might be the decision on this point, practical connection with both sides was now out of the question.\* The proceedings of the synod indicate more of a knowledge of the "big meetings" than of the conference of the United Brethren; and these meetings were therefore made to mark the antagonism. The moment was reached when neither party could afford to have its acts discredited or negated by the course of the other party. If any blame must be charged, it must fall principally to an earlier period. There might be vacillation on the part of a few, as in the case of J. G. Pfrimmer and D. Aurandt, one of whom went one way and one the other; or there might be an after-change from one side to

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\* In reference to the expulsion of Geeting, Dr. Dubbs speaks as follows: "We can hardly resist the conclusion that Geeting expected this action, and did not desire it to be different."

the other, as in the case of Thomas Winters; but none that had been longer or more profoundly in the religious movement were ignorant of their true position and proper alliances. It is not meant, however, that Mr. Otterbein and his associates became freed from temporary misgivings, that they ceased to turn with burdened hearts toward the churches of their fathers, or that they became indifferent to the way in which they, in their reputation and influence for good, were made to suffer.

On the statement to the effect that Otterbein never intended to found a new "sect," it is unnecessary to dwell. All this is readily admitted, and much more. But what he did not intend as to the raising up of a new denomination, Providence brought about, and coming to recognize a higher purpose than his own, he did not place himself athwart it. It is also granted that in consequence of some facts in Mr. Otterbein's connections being more or less hidden from general view, statements have been by some innocently made as to Mr. Otterbein's course that are nevertheless far from tenable.

Dr. Benjamin Kurtz has left the following testimony as to the light in which Mr. Otterbein was viewed by the public: "During the latter part of his life he was no longer regarded as a

minister of the German Reformed Church." Dr. Benjamin Kurtz went to Baltimore in 1815, as the assistant of his uncle, Dr. J. D. Kurtz, who as the pastor of the Lutheran church in Baltimore was twenty-seven years a most intimate friend of Mr. Otterbein.

Mr. Asbury's testimony in reference to the German fathers, and especially Otterbein, given in 1812, while Mr. Otterbein was yet living, was as follows: "Pre-eminent among these is William Otterbein, who assisted in the ordination which set apart your speaker to the superintendency of the Methodist Episcopal Church. William Otterbein was regularly ordained to the ministry in the German Presbyterian Church. He is one of the best scholars and greatest divines in America. Why, then, is he not where he began? He was irregular. Alas, for us! the zealous are necessarily so to those whose cry is, 'Put me into the priest's office, that I may eat a morsel of bread.' Osterwald has observed, 'Hell is paved with the skulls of unfaithful ministers.'" Such was not Boehm, such is not Otterbein; and now his sun of life is setting in brightness. Behold the saint of God leaning upon his staff, waiting for the chariots of Israel!"

A statement of Dr. Zacharias, pastor at Frederick City, Maryland, from 1835 to 1873, gives to

Mr. Otterbein, from a candid Reformed standpoint, his proper position. After saying that "he became the founder of the sect of the United Brethren," he added, "but he was never separated formally from the German Reformed Church." In some historical sermons preached by Dr. Harbaugh, this latter statement is identically repeated. But while it is allowed that he was never formally separated from the Reformed Church, the reader will see in the account of his last years, as given in the following pages, in what direction his real relations lay.


It has been far from pleasant to the writer to dwell so long on these disputed points, but as assertions contrary to what he fully believes to be the facts as to Mr. Otterbein's relations are continually being made, on what seems to him little other or better ground than the retention of Mr. Otterbein's name on the roll of the synod, he has deemed it necessary to show the fallaciousness of the assumptions put forward. Nothing begets worse feelings than an "it is" met by an "it is not." If the writer has erred, in any respect, he trusts that in the facts here given his readers will find such materials as will assist them in forming for themselves a correct opinion. The positive evidence as to Mr. Otterbein's relations lies not so much in what any one has said of him, as in the whole tenor of his later course.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### OTTERBEIN AND THE UNITED BRETHREN.

The year 1800 — Newcomer's Account of the Conference — Names of Preachers — Preface to the Minutes — The Minutes of 1800 — The Election of Bishops — Conference of 1801 — Minutes of 1802 — Minutes of 1805 — The State of the Work — Otterbein's Preaching at Conferences and Big Meetings — Otterbein Sick — Partial Recovery.

HE year 1800 was full of events, as well as replete with interest. May 12th Mr. Otterbein was present at the Reformed synod, for, properly speaking, the last time. May 31st he was present at the great meeting at the Antietam. Following this meeting, Mr. Newcomer met "Father Otterbein," on June 3d, at Peter Kemp's. It was at this place that, on the twenty-fifth of the following September, the first conference in the regular series of annual conferences was to be held. The place is two and one fourth miles west of Frederick City, Maryland. The house of Peter Kemp was a large stone house, and is still a firm and comfortable dwelling. While Mr. Kemp was likely engaged to some extent in preaching at this time, he was not a regularly recognized preacher.

We can not do better than to take our first glimpse of the conference of 1800 through the following from Newcomer's journal: "25th. This morning we set out early; came to Bro. Peter Kemp's,\* where the conference is to be held; found Father Otterbein, Boehm, and twelve other preachers there. The conference was opened with singing and prayer by Otterbein and Boehm. The former gave a powerful exhortation. Then were all the brethren present separately examined respecting their progress in the divine life, and their success and industry in preaching.—26th. This forenoon Father Otterbein preached from Amos iv. 12. Boehm spoke after him. After transacting some other business the conference closed with prayer."

The following is the list of preachers:

*Preachers present*—Otterbein, Boehm, Geeting, Pfrimmer, Newcomer, Lehman, Troxel, Christian Crum, Henry Crum, John Hershey, J. Geisinger, Henry Boehm, D. Aurandt, and Jacob Baulus.

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\*I have given careful attention to the question as to whether the conference was held at Peter Kemp's, as stated by Newcomer and others, or at Frederick Kemp's, as given in the regular minutes, and from these copied into the discipline. Frederick Kemp lived at Jefferson, in the same county, and his house was a regular preaching-place. A decisive testimony, among others, in favor of Peter Kemp's as the place, is the testimony of Henry Boehm, who was present at the conference, and was at the time keeping a regular diary. The name Frederick, as applied to the person, may have been a clerical error, occasioned by the close proximity in the minutes of the name Frederick as applied to the county. The minutes seem not to have been recorded in the record-book before 1803.

*Absent*—Schaffer, Crider, Grosh, Neidig, Abraham Mayer, G. Fortenbach, David Snyder, Adam Riegel, A. Hershey, Christian Hershey, John Ernst, of Pennsylvania; Thomas Winters, M. Thomas, of Maryland; Simon Herre, Daniel Strickler, John Senseny, Abraham Hiestand, and I. Niswander, of Virginia. David Snyder had no regular license before 1801, though he was engaged in preaching before that time. Sometimes laymen became preachers before themselves or others were aware of it; and sometimes a license signed at a great meeting by two or three preachers would anticipate, by a considerable time, a license signed by Otterbein and Boehm, or the giving of a license at a regular conference. In addition to the names given, there might be added the names of Sentineyer, Weidman, Henry Landis, and others, who co-operated with the United Brethren, but not all of whom were ever regularly associated.

The record-book containing all of the minutes of the early conferences, beginning with 1800, fortunately has been preserved. The minutes, however, omit many of the principal transactions; perhaps because so much was trusted to personal agency and supervision outside of the conference sessions. Incidents are given, while facts resting upon principles that had been settled by the very

course of things, are passed by. Important votes, the reception of members, ordinations, in 1807 the ordering of a hymn-book to be compiled and printed, and many other things known from other sources to have formed a part of the proceedings, are altogether omitted.

The series of minutes has the following preface: "Here now follow what, from the year 1800 the United Brotherhood in Christ Jesus—until 1800 the United (*Die Vereinigte*\*)—have done in their annual conferences for the government of preachers and church-members."

The name *Die Vereinigte* is a collective for *Die Vereinigten Brueder* (the United Brethren). The

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\* Many other names were also in use; as, *Die Freiheits Leute* (the Liberty People), *Die Gemeinde* (the Church), *Die Allgemeine Bruederschaft* (the General Brotherhood), *Die Neu Reformirte* (the New Reformed), *Die Neu Mennoniten* (the New Mennonites), *Die Brueder* (the Brethren), *Die Boehmische* (Boehm's Followers), *Die Otterbeinianer* (the Otterbeinians), and *Die Unpartheischen* (the Unsectarian). Some of these designations would include all of the societies, and, on the other hand, some of them were used, in particular cases, in regard to societies that sustained only a fraternal relation to the United Brethren. There were also circles of Mennonites that were called by the name of the minister through whom they were awakened, as the *Landis Leute* (People), and the *Lichtes Leute* (the followers of Felix Light, who began to preach between 1800 and 1803). Through the course of forty years these semi-independent Mennonite circles were breaking into the widening circle of the United Brethren. Thus the Mennonite contribution was greatly enlarged. After the death of the pioneer preachers the lines on the Reformed side, owing to a reviving church-spirit, became sufficiently rigid to materially lessen the accessions from that quarter. In consequence of this waning importance of Reformed elements, some, by failing to look back to the earlier times, fail to recognize the real position and importance of Otterbein.

term united was the basis, and was sometimes used alone, and sometimes in connection now with one name and now with another. The statement, often made, that the name United Brethren was given by the official that drew up the deed for the Hagerstown church-property is altogether incorrect. The deed in question was not made until 1805, and the name then used was not United Brethren, but the Society of United Christians. The name United Brethren is a monument of the fraternity of spirit, whose ushering in was signalized by the memorable words of Otterbein, "We are brethren." Undoubtedly it was the memory and genius of these extraordinary words, together with the epochal occasion out of which they were born, that determined and matured the final name, the United Brethren in Christ. In 1800 the latter part of the name was adopted for the purpose, as all agree, of avoiding confusion, the name United Brethren not being, in the different contingencies that might arise, sufficiently distinguishing.

The minutes of the early conferences, notwithstanding their imperfect nature, have sufficient interest, especially since the counsels of Otterbein were supreme in the conferences, to justify the insertion here of the complete minutes of two or three sessions. After the recital of time, place,

and members present, as already given, the minutes of the conference of 1800 are as follows:

Every preacher spoke first in regard to his own experience, and then declared his intention to continue to preach, by the assisting grace of God, in full earnest, to the honor of God and the blessing of mankind.

*Resolved*, That two preachers shall be appointed to investigate the case of D. Aurandt, as to his authority to administer baptism and the Lord's-supper.

*Resolved*, That annually a day shall be appointed on which the unsectarian\* preachers shall assemble together and counsel how they can become more useful in their office, so that the church of God may be built up, sinners converted unto God, and God glorified.

The conference was opened with prayer, the reading of a chapter, and a short exhortation by Brother Otterbein, and closed with prayer.

It will be noticed that there is no reference to the election of bishops. To the secretary, George A. Geeting, it probably seemed an unnecessary work to formally elect to the office of bishop persons that were already, by the calling of Providence, virtual bishops. But the evidence from other sources that the conference did not neglect this matter of form is abundantly sufficient. The

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\* This is not the only instance of the "unsectarian" becoming a distinct body.

first general conference, which met only fifteen years later, some of the members having been members of the conference of 1800, said in regard to those that comprised the conference of 1800: "They there united themselves into a society which bears the name of the United Brethren in Christ, and elected William Otterbein and Martin Boehm as superintendents, or bishops." Henry Boehm, who was present, and was recognized as a member of the conference, says, "They elected bishops for the first time. William Otterbein and Martin Boehm, my father, were unanimously chosen."\* In the eighteenth section of the minutes of 1802, as hereafter quoted, Otterbein and Boehm are called superintendents. The word used is *eldesten*; but that office, and not order, is meant no one will question. The United Brethren have always used the terms bishop and superintendent as equivalents. In 1805 Otterbein and Boehm were re-elected bishops, their election in 1804 having been prevented by the general sickness of that year, and the small attendance at the conference in consequence. After Otterbein and

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\*"Reminiscences," pp. 55 and 56. Henry Boehm, known as the centenarian of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was in 1800 keeping a regular diary, and his statements relating to the events of 1800 are based upon that diary. After he had been at the United Brethren conference, and at the Methodist general conference of 1800, and had witnessed the settled order and discipline of the Methodists, he made up his mind, as he says, "to enter their itinerant ministry."

Boehm became, on account of old age, incapable of attending the sessions of conference, there came to be much confusion and many differences. There was need of an active bishop, and in this character Newcomer, in 1813, was elected. The death of Martin Boehm and of George A. Geeting during the previous year made this election necessary. To show that Newcomer's election meant, not the election of the first bishop by the United Brethren, but the election of an active bishop, Newcomer's own words are sufficient. He wrote, "The brethren elected a superintendent, or bishop, who is to have charge of the whole society; if possible, to attend all of the annual conferences of the United Brethren in Christ."

In 1801, all that were present the previous year, except Pfrimmer, Henry Boehm, Troxel, and Lehman, were present at the conference, which again met at Peter Kemp's. The new names in the list of those present were D. Strickler, Peter Senseny, Frederick Schaffer, John Neidig, A. Mayer, D. Snyder, M. Thomas, A. Hershey, D. Long, Thomas Winters, L. Duckwald, Peter Kemp, and M. Kessler. The following are extracts from the proceedings:

*Resolved*, That each preacher, after preaching, shall hold a conversation with those who may be seeking the conversion of their souls, whoever they may be.



*Resolved*, That the preachers shall aim to be short, and to avoid all superfluous words in their sermons and prayers; yet, should the Spirit of God lead them to lengthen their sermons, it is their duty to follow the divine direction.

It was also resolved that each preacher who could not attend the annual sessions of the conference, should give the conference due notice of the fact.

The following are the names of those that constituted the itineracy: Christian Newcomer, David Snyder, M. Thomas, Abraham Hershey, Daniel Strickler, Abraham Mayer, Frederick Schaffer, David Long, John Neidig, and Peter Kemp.

The following are the complete minutes for 1802:

Conference met at the house of John Cronise, Frederick County, Maryland, October 6th, 1802. The following members were present: William Otterbein, Martin Boehm, Christian Newcomer, John Hershey, Christopher Grosh, Abraham Troxel, Henry Crum, Michael Thomas, Dietrich Aurandt, David Snyder, Peter Kemp, Mathias Kessler, George A. Geeting.

Conference was opened with singing and prayer. O Lord, let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Grant to thy ministering servants grace to love thee above all. **Amen.**

The preachers present were examined in regard to their character and usefulness.

*Resolved*, To give to Valentine Huegel license to exhort.

*Resolved*, To write to Pfrimmer that for the present we will have nothing to do with him.

Brothers Ludwig Duckwald and William Ambrose, from Sleepy Creek, Virginia, arrived at conference.

Conference met October 7th. Sermon preached by William Otterbein from Hebrews xiii. 17. Exhortation by M. Boehm.

Bro. John Miller obtained license from the conference to exhort.

In regard to the keeping of a register of the names of the private members, it was found that out of twelve votes, nine were against the motion. So, with consent, the matter was dropped.

It shall be the duty of preachers to keep up prayer-meetings at their appointments, wherever it is possible.

Permission was given to Ludwig Duckwald to baptize and administer the Lord's-supper, according to the word of God.

Some proposals were made in regard to the collecting of a certain sum of money for our poor preachers.

*Resolved*, That, if any of our preachers shall do anything wrong, it shall be the duty of the preacher next (or nearest) to him to talk to him privately

in relation to the wrong. If he does not listen to him, or accept his advice, he shall take with him one or two more preachers; and if he does not listen to them, he shall be silenced until the next session of conference.

*Resolved*, That G. A. Geeting shall, next spring and fall, visit the congregations on Frederick Circuit.

*Resolved*, That Christian Newcomer shall visit Cumberland Circuit twice during next year.

*Resolved*, That Martin Boehm shall travel twice through Pennsylvania, to the Susquehanna, to ascertain the state of the church.

Jacob Baulus and Valentine Baulus were appointed to make visits from house to house through Middletown, Fredericktown, and so forth.

*Resolved*, That in case one of our superintendents -- W. Otterbein and Martin Boehm -- should die, another one in his place shall always be appointed. This is the wish of these two brethren and the unanimous wish of all the preachers present.

Ludwig Duckwald and John Neidig received permission to administer all the ordinances of the house of God.

Newcomer, in his account of this conference, says: "To-day our conference commenced at John Cronise's, with singing and prayer by Father Boehm. Otterbein addressed the brethren in his usual manner. The preachers present were all

examined separately. \* \* \* —7th. This day Otterbein preached from Hebrews xiii. 17, with great energy and power. Boehm followed him. Their discourses were particularly addressed to the preachers. \* \* \* —8th. This morning conference met again; in the afternoon Otterbein closed the session with another address. He exhorted us particularly to be careful to preach no other doctrine than what is plainly laid down in the Bible; that nothing less than a new creature in Christ Jesus will be acceptable in the sight of God; that we should be ardently and diligently engaged in the work of the Lord; and lastly, that we should love one another, and, for Jesus' sake, suffer and endure all things. He then dismissed the conference with a powerful prayer."

The conference of 1805 met May 29th, at the house of Jacob Baulus, near Middletown, Maryland. The following is the list of the preachers present: W. Otterbein, Martin Boehm, John Hershey, George A. Geeting, Daniel Strickler, Frederick Schaffer, Peter Kemp, L. Everhart, David Snyder, Christian Crum, Frederick Duckwald, William Ambrose, Jacob Baulus, Jacob Geisinger, Christian Berger, Abraham Mayer, Christian Newcomer, and George Benedum. The following are the proceedings entire:

Conference was opened by prayer and an exhortation by Brother Otterbein.

The preachers resolved to engage in the work of

the Lord with more earnestness than ever before, by the assisting grace of God. O Lord help thou us, thy poor and unworthy servants, for thine own sake. Amen.

The preachers were duly examined in regard to their moral and ministerial character.

Brother Pfrimmer again received permission to preach the gospel among us.

The following brethren arrived at the close of the session to-day: Ludwig Duckwald, Daniel Troyer, and Jacob Dchhof.

Conference met May 30th, at 8:00 A. M., and was opened by the reading of a chapter and prayer.

Bro. Newcomer agreed to travel the following year through Maryland and a certain part of Pennsylvania, and Christian Crum agreed to travel through Virginia. Resolved that each shall receive forty *livres* [less than \$8.00] for his labors per annum.

*Resolved*, That George A. Geeting shall be present at the appointed great meetings in Maryland, and on this side of the Susquehanna, in Pennsylvania.

It was recommended that Bro. Geeting should not reside in Hagerstown, and that Hagerstown should be regularly visited by our preachers.

*Resolved*, That the preachers that preach only where they like shall receive no compensation for their services, and that it shall be their duty to pay over to the conference the money that they may receive, for the benefit of the traveling preachers.

Permission was granted by this conference to Bro.

Frederick Duckwald, from Sleepy Creek, and Bro. Christian Berger, from Westmoreland, to baptize, administer the sacrament, and solemnize marriages.

*Resolved*, That the next session of this conference shall be held at the house of Lorenz Everhart, on Tuesday before Whitsunday, 1806, and that a great meeting shall be held there commencing the Saturday following.

The session of conference came to a close with the reading of a chapter and an appropriate exhortation.

W. OTTERBEIN.

MARTIN BOEHM.

It will be seen by the foregoing minutes that the itinerant feature in the method of supplying preaching was becoming more marked. Instead of a circuit formed by each preacher about his own home, with the presence and assistance at irregular intervals of the leading preachers, circuits independent of particular ministers were becoming more clearly outlined. Preachers circulated more and under better superintendence. Newcomer, Geeting, and others traveled much from place to place, assisting the preachers on sacramental and other occasions, and doing much miscellaneous itinerant work. A number of churches were early erected for the use of the United Brethren, some of them being United Brethren churches in the proper sense, but others being community churches. A United Brethren church was built

in Alleghany County, west of the Alleghany Mountains, as early as 1802.

With this survey of the general work down to Mr. Otterbein's last attendance at an annual conference, let us return and gather as best we may some items lying nearer to his personal position and more immediate labors. Here we are again compelled to fall back on Newcomer's journal; and to a considerable extent we shall be led over the ground already outlined. But we are approaching so close to the end of his laborious career, that everything that lies within our reach is to be sought and treasured. Mr. Newcomer's allusions to Mr. Otterbein do honor at the same time to the qualities of his own mind and heart, and give a noble reflection to the closing days of a life grandly devoted to the work of saving the lost. These allusions will be mainly found in connection with accounts of great meetings and conferences.

The Sabbath following the conference of 1800 Mr. Otterbein was present at a great meeting. Mr. Newcomer makes this note: "Father Otterbein preached from Revelation iii. 7-12: 'And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man

openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.' He spoke with astonishing clearness and perspicuity, and appeared to be inspired with the gift of interpretation."

Mr. Newcomer made the following note in reference to the great meeting at Antietam for 1801: "May 24th. Father Otterbein preached this forenoon with such power and grace that almost every soul on the ground seemed to be pierced to the heart. We had a large congregation, and the attention of every soul was riveted to the spot, \* \* \*—25th. To-day we had truly a day of grace and of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit—a Pentecost as in days of old."

In 1802 Otterbein was present at the great meeting at the Antietam. Newcomer says: "June 5th. To-day our meeting commenced. Father Otterbein preached the first sermon, from Mark x. 29–31. After preaching we had a small conference with the preachers present." Newcomer, after referring further to the success of Otterbein's preaching, gives an account of an extended tour made by Otterbein and others through Virginia. Under date of June 12th Newcomer says: "This day a sacramental meeting commenced at



Jacob Funkhouser's, in Shenandoah County. Otterbein, Strickler, and Crum were present. Otterbein delivered the first discourse; I followed, and Bro. Strickler concluded. At night we had meeting at Christian Funkhouser's. We had a great time. Eight souls were happily converted, and many others were crying for mercy. I lodged at John Funkhouser's.—Sunday, 13th. A great congregation assembled to-day. Otterbein spoke first, from Daniel vii. 13 and 14. I can not but always be astonished and lost in amazement at the power and energy with which this servant of God declares the counsel of his Master."

The conference of 1803 was held in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania. Mr. Otterbein preached "as usual a very powerful and interesting discourse." On this trip he also visited and preached at different places in Pennsylvania.

The following paragraph, for the year 1804, will give us a glance into the character and workings of Mr. Otterbein's church in Baltimore. Geeting, Newcomer, and Peter Kemp made one of their many visits to Baltimore, and the paragraph shows how they were engaged: "February 11th. This evening we arrived at Father Otterbein's, in Baltimore. Several of the brethren were there awaiting us. I went home with Peter Hoffman.—Sunday, 12th. This forenoon Brother Geeting preached from Revelation xxi. 6 and 7,

with great power. In the afternoon I preached from Acts xii. 11. At night we had a prayer-meeting at Smith's; had a blessed time, and stayed there for the night.—13th. To-day we visited several friends; also the Rev. Mr. Dashields of the Episcopal Church. At night we had meeting at Bender's. A great many people were assembled.—14th. This day we again visited the members of the society in the city, also the Methodist Bishop Whatcoat, who happened to be here. At night Brother Kemp preached in the church. I gave an exhortation. \* \* \*—15th. This forenoon I met a class—all sisters—at Mr. King's. At night another class met at Otterbein's—all brethren.—16th. This afternoon I met another class—all sisters. At night I preached. \* \* \*—17th. This evening we had a meeting at Michael Grubb's.—18th. I preached at Hoefflich's." The meetings not in the church were held in the houses of members.

The following is Newcomer's account of the conference of 1805, and of some of the attendant events.—"May 29th. To-day our annual conference commenced at Brother Jacob Baulus's. Twenty-one preachers were present. Father Otterbein and Martin Boehm were elected presidents.\* The character of all the preachers

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Newcomer uses the term "president" of himself in 1813 and 1814.

present was examined, and some other business transacted. — 30th. This day Father Boehm preached with uncommon power from Galatians vi. 15. The session of the conference closed at night. — 31st. To-day Father Otterbein preached in Hagerstown in the German Reformed church. Oh, what feelings always penetrate my soul whenever I hear this old servant of Christ declare the counsel of God! In depth of erudition, perspicuity of thought, and plainness of language, he is unique and matchless."

This was the last conference that Mr. Otterbein attended. Since 1800 he had missed only one conference, and that was the one of 1804—a year of unprecedented sickness and mortality. He had been present at every great meeting at Antietam, except that of 1803. After 1805 his age and infirmities did not permit him to leave Baltimore.

In December, 1805, Newcomer received intelligence that "Father Otterbein was very ill," and "that in all probability he could not recover from his illness." He hastened to his side. On the 17th of December he made the following entry: "This morning Otterbein was somewhat better. We held a long conversation together. Among other things, he said if we would only prove faithful to the work that was so auspiciously begun the

Lord would certainly be with us, and continue unto us his blessings. Toward evening his pains increased. He inquired of those around his bed whether I was present. Being answered in the affirmative, I drew to him, and asked what he desired. 'O Christian,' said he, 'my pains are so severe and incessant that without the assisting grace of God I must sink, for my strength will be shortly exhausted. Do pray that the Lord may graciously lend me his assistance, and if according to his will, cause my pains to moderate.' We sung a few verses of a hymn. Brother Ettinger, who was also present, and myself prayed and besought a throne of grace in his behalf. Before we had concluded, the pains abated, and in a short time he fell into a slumber. After commending him once more to the divine mercy in fervent prayer, I bid him, in all probability, a last farewell, and on reaching him my hand he said with great emphasis, 'The God of Abraham be with thee and bless thee. Remember me at a throne of grace.' "

A few days afterward the vestry of Mr. Otterbein's church placed upon the record this action: "It was found that our preacher was too old to attend the meetings and to act as president, and Peter Hoffman was elected president *pro tempore*." It was at this time that Mr. Otterbein made the

will that was probated eight years afterward. He subsequently regained some of his wonted strength. There is no account, however, of his being, after this sickness, farther from Baltimore than to the place of Mr. Leonard Yundt, who lived four and one half miles out of the city, on the Frederick road. Mr. Yundt often sent in his carriage for him, and he would go out and spend the day.

Instead of Mr. Otterbein's going out now to assist "his preachers," they came to assist him. Again and again Newcomer, Geeting, and others went to Baltimore to preach and to assist on sacramental and other occasions. The following are a few of Newcomer's entries: "1808, April 16th. We rode thirty-eight miles to Baltimore. I lodged with Father Otterbein.—Sunday, 17th. This forenoon Brother Geeting preached. I gave an exhortation. Otterbein and Geeting administered the sacrament. In the afternoon I preached."—"1808, October 2d. Brother Baulus preached this forenoon. Otterbein and myself administered the sacrament."


We must not think that all of Mr. Otterbein's energy was gone, and that all efficient service was at an end. In December, 1809, Mr. Newcomer was at Baltimore, and heard him preach "with great power and unction from on high." In 1810 he

sent a letter to the conference, and represented the United Brethren in important negotiations. In the minutes of 1812, the last that the pious Geeting lived to record, a list including twenty-six names is given of the "brethren that were authorized to administer all of the ordinances of God's house," the first name, as a matter of course, being that of William Otterbein. The account of the events of the year 1813 is reserved for the final chapter.

## CHAPTER XIV.

**FRIENDLY RELATIONS—DEATH OF BOEHM AND GEETING.**

**An Incident—A Plan of Co-operation with the Methodists—Organic Union not Thought Of—Early Friendliness—Priority in the Work—Ranke's Description of Popular Movements—Comparative Disadvantages of the United Brethren—Unfair Classification—Review of Boehm's Life—Incidents—The Hollingsworth Paper—Boehm's Alleged Withdrawal from the United Brethren—Review of Geeting's Life.**

N incident will indicate the honored position that Mr. Otterbein gave to the disciples of John Wesley. Rev. John Christian Smith, a junior preacher among the United Brethren, once spent three or four days with him at Baltimore. The conversation turning upon the Methodists, Mr. Otterbein asked him if he had ever seen Methodism in the Bible. He answered that he did not know, unless there might be an application in Psalms lxxviii. 11-13: "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it. Kings of armies did flee apace: and she that tarried at home divided the spoil. Though ye have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with

yellow gold." Mr. Otterbein then turned to Zechariah viii. 20-22: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; It shall yet come to pass that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord." Both of the passages given would fitly indicate not only his view of Methodism, but also his view of the demands of the time and the method of supply.

We will notice Mr. Otterbein now as representing the United Brethren in negotiations looking toward a closer union with the Methodists. For a number of years this close union had been, by some, earnestly desired. In 1809 a committee was appointed by the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Church, in session at Harrisonburg, Va., to confer with Mr. Newcomer and "ascertain whether any, and if any, what union could be effected between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the United Brethren in Christ." The conference then, in open session, discussed the matter, and gave their decision to Mr. Newcomer, in the form of a written resolution, which he "was to deliver to Wm. Otterbein in Baltimore." The



conference also addressed a letter to the United Brethren conference. Mr. Newcomer then communicated with Mr. Otterbein, and soon afterward visited him in Baltimore. The United Brethren conference, which met soon afterward, gave a friendly answer to the overtures of the Methodists. The letter giving this answer was signed by Boehm, Geeting, and Newcomer. The next session of the Baltimore Conference was held in Baltimore, in the spring of the following year, and during the session, the subject of the union received no little attention, both from Methodists and United Brethren. Martin Boehm, Christian Crum, Christian Newcomer, and Mr. Otterbein in concert with his vestry, on the part of the United Brethren, took the matter under consideration. Mr. Newcomer makes the following note in regard to the assembling of the vestry: "To-day the vestry of Otterbein's church assembled, to take into consideration a communication of the Methodist conference. Otterbein was president of the vestry. The communication related to the subject of a closer union between the two societies; namely, the Methodist and the United Brethren." "Terms of accommodation," as they were called by the Methodist conference, relating chiefly to the use of churches and to class-meetings and love-feasts, were agreed upon.

Indeed, it was not difficult to form such a "union." The United Brethren had little thought of entering the English field, and the Methodists, at that time, had not the least thought of a distinct work among the Germans. The merging of the two societies into one was, as much from considerations on the one side as on the other, impossible, and was not thought of. Some, in more recent times, have thought that a complete union might have been accomplished. Their mistake grows out of their overlooking the early origin, composition, and, to a degree, the confirmed ways of the United Brethren; and, on the other side, their overlooking the belief of the English population that the use of the German language was soon altogether to cease. Other points they likewise overlook. Methodist writers have not been properly aware of the extent to which organization and discipline belonged, at an early time, to the United Brethren. Quinn's Journal by J. F. Wright, and Bishop Roberts' Journal by Charles Elliot, and other published works, are in error on this point. Even Bishop Asbury was not aware that the United Brethren had kept any record of their proceedings. References from a United Brethren source to opposition to a form of discipline, should be understood of a printed discipline and the extent of the matter that

it was feared would be incorporated. In the same way, opposition to classing meant opposition to things connected with classes. There was, however, much diversity among the United Brethren. Yet some that are sometimes spoken of as United Brethren were not, in the early period, strictly such. From the absence of printed regulations, advanced organization, and customary ecclesiastical language, many have been led to overlook elements in the rise of the United Brethren that were really primitive and important.

The great friendliness, in early days, of Methodists and United Brethren can hardly be appreciated by their successors of the present generation. Mr. Spayth, who entered the United Brethren conference in 1812, in referring, nearly forty years afterward, to this early joyous fellowship, said: "I confess it is hard for me to get away from this sunny spot. The love, I trust, still burns within my breast. I can look back and see the smiles and cordial shakes of the hand — hands now cold in death, while mine writes and trembles — and the hearty and joyous welcome when Methodists and United Brethren met." Many on the side of the Methodists have used similar expressions. But whatever may have been the benefit, at the time, of the "treaty of amity and friendship," and whatever benefits in the most comprehensive

and enduring way may have been secured, the gain, as regards church-extension and numerical increase, was wholly with the Methodists.

Otterbein and Boehm were preaching the grand evangelical truths that brought about conversions and revivals before there was a Methodist class or a Methodist preacher in America. In regard to the independent beginnings of the general revival culminating in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Dr. Blackburn, in his Church History, has the following: "Almost contemporaneously the omnipresent Spirit, who breathed where he listed, was giving new life to multitudes of people through the labors of Christian David among the Moravians, the Pietists in Germany, Antoine Court in France, Jonathan Edwards in New England, certain pastors in Scotland, Howell Harris in Wales, and Whitefield and Wesley in England. The widely-extended work had begun before the Wesleys made any really popular impression." In some of these cases there was not independence as regards the leaders, but in regard to the preparation of the people there was yet a preparation in individual hearts. In addition to the examples given, one might refer to Cocceianism and Labadism in Holland, perhaps to Jansenism in the Catholic Church, and a United Brethren would not fail to mention the movement under Otter-

bein. Otterbein may have been dependent, in a measure on influence from Holland and from the Pietists, but Wesley received even more influence from the Moravians, and not less from the Pietists. Yet both, by assimilating the influence that they received, and by adding something from themselves, gave the character of independence to the movements connected with their names. The added elements, however, were far from being altogether of themselves; they belonged to the age and the conditions of society. As these men shared the peculiarities of their age most consciously, they were specially qualified for leadership.

An illustrative quotation in regard to the preparation of the people will be introduced from Ranke's History of the Popes. The passage, though on a somewhat different subject, gives us a vivid view of the seemingly spontaneous preparation of society for great changes, through causes that lie as much beyond man's observation as they lie beyond his ability to supply or control them. We would say, doubtless, that the preparation for modern evangelical Christianity came from God, and yet secondary causes are not to be ignored. When men's minds are hard to move, and religion languishes, ought we not to think of a forming or returning force that will lift society to a more

hopeful plane? If the religious impulses of an age seem in time to wear themselves shallow, it yet remains a fact that artificiality and worldliness become at the last insupportable. The paragraph also indicates the tendency to likeness in form, and at the same time the possibility of great diversity. The following is the passage: "We are not to believe that the influence of public opinion on the world has begun to make itself felt for the first time in our own day; through every age of modern Europe it has constituted an important element of social life. Who shall say whence it arises or how it is formed? It may be regarded as the most peculiar product of that identification of interests which holds society in compact forms, as the most intelligible expression of those internal movements and revolutions by which life, shared in common, is agitated. \* \* \* It obtains the mastery over men's minds by the force of involuntary convictions. But only in its most general outlines is it in harmony with itself; within these it is reproduced in greater or smaller circles innumerable, and with modifications varied to infinity." \*

Undoubtedly for the general evangelical movement there was a wide and ripened preparation in society, resting in those deep conditions that God

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\*Vol. I., p. 99.

has ordained whereby man is to be held within the limits of hope. Undoubtedly, also, no one man, or any limited number of men, or any single manifestation, should be exalted over the whole field of renewed spiritual life. With this digression, let us return to the parallel movements of the Methodists and the United Brethren.

Especially in preaching in the German districts of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, Mr. Otterbein and his co-laborers were many years in advance of the Methodists. When the Methodists appeared in the communities that had been occupied by the German evangelists, they always met with a hearty welcome, and every facility was offered for their largest success in preaching and in winning souls. As the young people grew up and became acquainted with the English language, the door for English preaching became wider and wider.\*

John Wesley had given to the Methodists many of the best elements of the Anglican Church. Their system became developed and was thoroughly proved under the eye of Mr. Wesley himself, who ranks as one of the best organizers

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\*Quinn, a pioneer of the Methodist Church, in his journal for 1802, in allusion to four of "Mr. Otterbein's societies," says: "They had voluntarily placed themselves under our watch-care for the purpose of obtaining English preaching, for the benefit of their neighbors, and of their rising families, who were losing a knowledge of the German language."

and administrators that England has produced. With the confidence inspired by unprecedented success on the other side of the water, Methodism entered, in the New World, upon a still more vigorous and successful career. With the Germans the case was very different. Instead of building so much on historic Christianity, it was with them more as if the Master had again gone down to the shore of the sea, and come forth at the head of a new band of Galilean fishermen. In some circumstances, something of this kind may be necessary, yet it always has its disadvantages. The aversion of the German mind, too, to a thorough discipline, with which Luther in his time had to contend, lingered with the Germans of America. The embarrassing circumstances, likewise, that belonged to the beginning of the movement, gave rise to such a type for the work as put, in subsequent times, sad limitations on its progress. The circumstances of a German people in a country prevailingly English, with the proverbial difficulties arising from the attempt to substitute the English for the German language, go far in explaining losses and slowness of growth. But taking the conditions among the Germans as they were, perhaps better, all in all considered, could not have been done.

After Methodism had become everywhere



known, and had excited the opposition and ridicule of a certain class of society, the United Brethren, as their preaching was attended with like phenomena, were called in derision Dutch Methodists. Newcomer says that they were thus called by the "worldly-minded." They, however, never accepted the designation. There are German Methodists, but they are not the United Brethren. Nor are the United Brethren an offshoot or branch of Methodism, though a certain class of writers, from motives that are perfectly transparent, persist in thus classing them. In early times, when the German fathers had occasion to refer to both societies, their designations were the "English brethren" and the "German brethren."

As this chapter and the two preceding chapters trace, though on different lines, the life of Mr. Otterbein down to the close of 1812, a little space will now be given to two of his co-laborers, who, in 1812, were called from labor to reward. These devoted co-laborers were Martin Boehm and George Adam Geeting. In regard to Martin Boehm, too, there are some points that connect themselves somewhat with the general subject already considered. In giving a running review, more or less of repetition of earlier statements will be unavoidable.

Martin Boehm was born in 1725. He was chosen minister in 1756. He did not, however, enter upon ministerial duties at once. In 1759 he was chosen full minister, or bishop. He had now the privilege of administering the ordinances as well as of preaching. When Boehm asked what he should preach, he was told that he should preach "repentance and faith." Ominous words! He was led into the truth by reflecting on the doctrines that he himself preached. A journey to Virginia, by bringing him in contact with the disciples of Whitefield, brought a great blessing to him. Through several years his sphere of preaching became wider and more crowded. Intensifying opposition was also excited. Between 1766 and 1768 he met Otterbein at Isaac Long's. After temporary separations and the gradual overcoming of difficulties lying in the stage and nature of the work and the disturbed condition of the country at large, the widening circle of the labors of Boehm again touched the likewise extending circle of Mr. Otterbein's labors. Henceforth their labors were united. But as Mr. Boehm had no settled charge over particular congregations, his itinerant labors, especially in Pennsylvania, were more constant and extensive. Beginning with 1789 he was present at every conference of the United Brethren down to 1809, with the ex-

ception of those of 1806 and 1808, being present in 1809 for the last time. In 1800 and 1805 he was, with Otterbein, elected bishop. In 1810 he was present in Baltimore when the relations of the United Brethren and the Methodists were being considered. About 1805, however, his more active labors ceased; and with reason enough, for he was seventy-nine years of age. In his later years he was, in his appearance, truly venerable. Notwithstanding his many hardships, he retained to the last considerable bodily vigor and freshness of countenance. In his preaching he was unctious, magnetic, and strikingly effective.

A few incidents in regard to Mr. Boehm may not be out of place. On one occasion he was to preach on the Conewago, in Pennsylvania. A Mr. Brand had opened his house for meetings. His neighbor, Mr. B. Carper, was highly offended at this, as Boehm and those associated with him were generally regarded as "false prophets and deceivers." It was said that they had "such bewitching powers over the people" that when they once had a start in a family or neighborhood, no one knew where the mischief would end. Carper resolved that he would kill the preacher, and so went to Brand's house, and stationed himself at the door to wait the close of the meeting. At the same time he had an opportunity to listen

to the discourse. It appeared to him that Brand had told the preacher all about him. In an instant a fearful trembling came over him. In another moment he turned and fled toward his own house. The tones of the preacher and the face with "a large beard" followed him, and he found no rest until he was a new creature in Christ.

At a meeting held by Boehm in an open field near York, Pennsylvania, a great many people were in attendance. In those days of horseback riding, large boots with spurs were worn. Among those present was Dr. Peter Senseny, who walked about the grounds having his legs ensconced within a large pair of riding-boots and spurs. Boehm in dwelling upon the wickedness of the times exclaimed, "Some sinners are going to hell with boots and spurs on." These words echoed in the heart of Senseny until he was led to make his peace with God. He afterward moved to Winchester, Virginia. He was for some years an honored preacher of the gospel.\*

At one time Boehm, in company with some others, all on horseback, was on his way, as it seems, to a Sabbath-afternoon appointment. As they passed along and turned about the corner of a hedge they came upon a company of forty or fifty boys, called together by a game of ball.

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\*For this and the preceding incident see Huber's Autobiography.

Boehm turned his horse toward them, got their attention, and gave them a short sermon on the sin of Sabbath-breaking. The boys soon quit the ground, and the reproof of Boehm led to the conversion, soon afterward, of a number of the young people in the community.

We now turn to the death of this honored veteran. On the 23d of March, 1812, at his own home, Martin Boehm, the co-laborer of Otterbein, the laborious and good Martin Boehm, fell asleep in Jesus. A few days after his body was placed beneath the sod, Bishop Asbury arrived upon the scene, and in a fitting funeral discourse paid a noble tribute to the departed. Martin Boehm at the time of his death was in his eighty-seventh year. He had been a preacher of the gospel for fifty-five years.

A great deal of attention has been given by different writers, to a paper relating to Mr. Otterbein and Mr. Boehm and their German associates that was published originally, in 1823, in the *Methodist Magazine*. The paper has generally been supposed to have been written during the life of Bishop Asbury by its author, Francis Hollingsworth, the transcriber of Bishop Asbury's journal. But this was not the case. Bishop Asbury, shortly before his death, requested Mr. Hollingsworth to draw up an account of the German preachers

and their work. Mr. Hollingsworth, in his introduction to the article referred to, expresses his regret that Mr. Asbury had not put the necessary materials at his disposal. The "Hollingsworth paper" has value for historical purposes, yet it must be used with discrimination. It contains, in the first place, an account of Martin Boehm, some of the facts for which were gathered by Mr. Hollingsworth. It then gives a list of questions proposed by Mr. Asbury, in 1811, to Martin Boehm, and the answers to the same as taken down by Henry Boehm. It then gives some parts of the sermon that was delivered by Mr. Asbury on the occasion of the death of Martin Boehm. The observations of Mr. Asbury, however, are not given without the "alteration and substitution of a few sentences and words." Finally there is given a list of questions proposed by Mr. Asbury to Mr. Otterbein, with the answers thereto by Mr. Otterbein. This last paper will be again referred to at the proper place.

No comment is necessary in regard to the part originating with Mr. Hollingsworth. The answers of Martin Boehm to Asbury's questions must not be regarded as at all full, or even carefully considered. For example, the answers make Martin Boehm to say, after speaking of his esteem for the Methodists, "Several of the minis-

ters with whom I labored continued to meet in a conference of the German United Brethren;" whereas but one session of the United Brethren conference had been held between the session of 1809, when he was himself present, and the time when the answers to the questions were taken down. Other statements are equally vague or inaccurate.

In regard to what was gleaned from Mr. Asbury's sermon, it is only necessary to state that it can not be expected that a sketch could be drawn up, in the short time allowed before the preaching of a funeral sermon, free from mistakes and one-sidedness. Bishop Asbury told what he knew best, and told it appreciatingly and without prejudice. The sketch should be taken for all it purports to be—a hasty sketch, slightly revised by one that confesses himself to have been little acquainted with the matters treated. The statements contained in the Hollingsworth paper may be of value when they fall harmoniously within a known outline; but no one would interpret a vague and incomplete statement against a line of concurrent facts.

It is proper to consider here the allegations, sometimes made, as to Mr. Boehm's connection with the Methodists. In 1775, according to a statement made by Henry Boehm, more likely

though about 1777, Methodist preachers first began to call at the home of Martin Boehm. As regards any public labors in Lancaster County, there were none before about 1780. Rupp says that "in 1781 Methodist ministers first visited" the county, and that "in 1782 Lancaster Circuit was formed." The wife and some of the children of Martin Boehm early united with the Methodists. Some of the family, however, continued with the United Brethren, and some of the descendants of Martin Boehm have been United Brethren ministers. In 1791 a chapel was built on land then owned by Jacob Boehm, the same having been deeded to him eight years before by his father. The deed for the church-lot was first made to Christian Herr, a zealous member of the United Brethren society and at whose house a number of United Brethren conferences were held. The lot was the next day deeded to a board of trustees, Martin and Jacob Boehm being two of the number, in trust for the Methodists. Some of the persons made trustees lived in other communities.

Undoubtedly the matured plans and assured permanency of the Methodists had, in ten short years, thoroughly won the confidence of Martin Boehm and his German neighbors. The basis for the work in the community was United Breth-



ren and German; the form and governing character came to be Methodist. Both societies continued for some time in the fullest and freest use of the house. Some of the great preachers of early Methodism found their way to Boehm Chapel, Bishop Asbury among the number. Methodism at that time was a rising tide of overwhelming force. Father Boehm enjoyed to the fullest the eclat of its great successes. Especially was he enraptured when he saw his youngest son Henry a successful Methodist preacher, and at length the traveling companion of the apostolic Asbury.

But no one needs to be told that the Methodist system was rigorous. Persons not members were only allowed to be present at the class-meetings "every second meeting," and then at the most only "twice or thrice." At love-feasts persons were not allowed under any pretext to be present "oftener than twice or thrice," unless they became "members." Within the memory of men yet young, doors have been closed upon sires not Methodists, while their children have enjoyed the privileges of a Methodist class-meeting. No one needs to complain of this. Such was the rule. This rule, however, was not at first enforced in regard to the class-meetings at the Boehm meeting-house. But in 1802 it was thought necessary that Martin Boehm's name should go upon the

class-book, if he was to be admitted to the meetings. He not unwillingly agreed to this. This need not be called unfairness on the side of the Methodists, and certainly was not duplicity on his part. Henry and Christian Crum, Asbury informs us, were "members of both societies." Yet if it were not for this testimony of Asbury, no one would now know that their names ever went upon a Methodist class-book. Other examples of such a connection could be given. After 1809, by the plan adopted between the United Brethren conference and the Baltimore and Philadelphia conferences of the Methodist Church, it was no longer necessary to go through these forms in order to obtain the privileges named. Martin Boehm's cordial relations with the Methodists, from first to last, and this joining, in old age, a Methodist class, under the circumstances named, are the sole basis for the statement made by some that for thirty-two years he was connected with the Methodists. As Martin Boehm continued years after he joined the local Methodist society in 1802 to work in the closest fellowship with the United Brethren, being present at the conference of 1809, and at that conference signing the communication to the Methodist conference, and as after this and before his death he missed only two sessions, any one can see where

his relations were. Rev. Isaac P. Cook, now deceased, a Methodist that was well versed in early Methodist and United Brethren history alike, said to the writer, one year ago, that he considered Mr. Boehm's relations to the Methodists to be but nominal.

George Adam Geeting we have met at almost every step. He has already been called the first complete and well-known product of the revival among the Germans. Next to Otterbein and Boehm, he subsequently stood as the chief exponent of the work. His labors were incessant. He never wavered and never tired. He only missed one session of conference—that of 1804. He it was that was called upon to bear the chief opprobrium of the new movement. If he were preaching in our day, no one would think of applying to him the epithet fanatic. Mildness, good judgment, and excellent facility in suiting himself to occasions, characterized him.

Spayth says of him: "Brother Geeting was like an early spring sun rising on a frost-silvered forest, which gradually affords more light and heat until you begin to hear the crackling of the ice-covered branches and the dripping of the melted snow as if it were a shower of rain, and until a smiling, joyous day appears. \*\*\* His winning manners and shining talents secured for him

universal respect and esteem, good congregations, and what was much more important, access to the hearts and consciences of those who came to hear him. He would follow the sinner in his devious paths, showing the severity of God's holy law in a manner that made stout hearts to quail and tremble; and then, with feelings and language peculiar to himself, present to the stricken-hearted a loving Savior, and in tones so beseechingly sweet, that the effect was invariably a congregation in tears."

When speaking of the opposition that he met, he would say, as the tears came to his eyes, "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt."

He was Mr. Otterbein's closest personal friend. Otterbein loved to be at no other place as he loved to be at Geeting's on the Antietam. There is something deeply pathetic in the attachments of these two men, ministers in the same great work—attachments that were not broken or impaired through the most critical and troubled times. Bishop Asbury knew Geeting well, and placed his encomium upon him. Henry Boehm, who often heard him preach, calls him "a splendid preacher," the "most splendid orator among the United Brethren in Christ." After old age had robbed Mr. Otterbein of some of his wonted power, sometimes his out-door audiences would scatter some-

what from the stand, but when Geeting would rise to speak, as is still remembered by living witnesses, his magnetic power and melting tones would draw the people compactly about him.

On the 28th of June, 1812, this servant of God calmly fell asleep. Accompanied by his wife he had gone to Baltimore to spend a week or two with Otterbein. He preached once more in Otterbein's pulpit. Becoming indisposed, he shortened his visit and set out for home. He put up the second night about thirty miles from Baltimore, at a public-house kept by a Mr. Snyder, where on similar visits he had often stopped. He became worse during the night. He spoke to those about him of the Christian's hope. Toward morning it became evident that the end was near. Mr. Spayth may tell the rest: "He became silent, and then said, 'I feel as though my end had come. Hark! hark!—who spoke? Whose voice is this I hear? Light! light! what golden light! Now all is dark again! Please help me out of this bed.' They did so. 'Now let us sing—

Komm' du lang verlangte Stunde,  
Komm' du Lebensgeist von oben;  
O wie soll mein froher Munde  
Jesu deine Treue loben.  
Wann mich deine Liebesmacht,  
Dir zu dienen frei gemacht.'

## TRANSLATION.

Come, thou long expected moment,  
Come, thou Spirit from on high,  
'Tis thy call, my Lord and Master;  
How shall I express my joy,  
When thy grace and power of love,  
Bids me rise to climes above?

“He now sunk on his knees, leaning against the bed, and prayed fervently, giving thanks to God for his abundant mercy toward him, his unprofitable servant. A prayer, this was, offered up at the very gate of heaven, and in it, mark you, there was no doubt, no fear, no desire for a longer stay on earth; but God the Father was confidently asked, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior, to look upon him, to hear and accept this his petition, to receive his poor servant, and to take him to himself, for the sake of the great love wherewith he had loved him, and delivered him from all evil.

“He was helped into bed again, and, in about fifteen minutes, while his hands were calmly folded, his ransomed spirit fled.” He was in the seventy-second year of his age, and had spent forty years in the ministry.

The death of Christian Newcomer, who ended his labors with his life eighteen years later, was similar to that of Geeting. But to attempt a further account of this persevering associate of


Mr. Otterbein, and so largely the successor to his burdens, is beyond the present purpose.

In the next chapter will be given some incidents of Mr. Otterbein's life, and in the next following will be given any of Mr. Otterbein's papers not already given that are still extant and accessible.

## CHAPTER XV.

### DOMESTIC LIFE—MISCELLANEOUS INCIDENTS.

Situation at the Parsonage—The Drucks Family—Domestic Incidents—Personal Habits—Benevolence—Otterbein and His Carriage-Boys—Otterbein in the Family—As Preacher and Pastor—Oppositions—Figures—Freemasonry—Unfavorable Incidents.

T is proposed to give in this chapter facts in regard to Mr. Otterbein's more private life, and miscellaneous incidents for which no suitable place has been found in the preceding pages. Some of the things given may be wanting in dignity and illustrative quality, or, for some other reason, may be deemed unsuitable to appear here. But it may be supposed that in consequence of their being what they are they have been handed down; and from the scantiness of our knowledge as to Mr. Otterbein's every-day life, it is deemed best to present such examples as have survived thus far the accidents of time. Thoughtful persons will consider, too, that the life of no one, however great or however engaged, is constantly attended with imposing circumstances.



When Mr. Otterbein went to Baltimore his wife had already been dead six years. For forty additional years he was to walk alone. The parsonage that was erected for him in 1785 was a small cottage of four rooms. For years Miss Elizabeth Schwope kept house for him. After his death she was married to a Mr. Brevett. The house stood close to the street, in front of where the present parsonage stands. Mr. Otterbein's study was on the side of the house next to the church. He possessed a good library, and spent much of his time, when at home, in his study. While his manner of life was simple, it was also, in every way, what was required of a person in his position. He cultivated flowers, and the children that had occasion to come to the parsonage were made glad by a bouquet plucked by his hand. Everything was kept scrupulously clean. Even the barn where he kept his cow had frequently to undergo a thorough whitewashing.

Some facts in reference to domestic life at the parsonage were handed down by Catharine and Elizabeth Drucks, who served in his house as domestics. The Drucks family, consisting of father and mother, one son, and three daughters, were redemptioners; that is, when they came to America their time was sold to pay their passage-money. Catharine subsequently worked at Otter-

bein's. She was afterward married, and finally came to Cincinnati, Ohio, where members of her family still live. When Catharine left the parsonage, her sister Elizabeth took her place; and so great was Otterbein's esteem for her that he made her a gift through his will. His household effects were for the most part divided out to those that had served in his house. By these persons he was ever remembered for his uniform kindness.

Mr. Otterbein would always have all that lived with him to attend church. It is said that he would go to market every Saturday, and that as long as turkeys could be had he would bring a small one home. This he would have prepared and partially roasted, and when church-time came it was placed in a small oven moderately heated, there to remain until the family returned from church.

He was very precise as to his dress and appearance. When away from home and having occasion to have washing done, he would sometimes, or at some places, stand by and tell how his shirt-bosoms should be ironed.

In earlier times he wore a pulpit gown while preaching, but not in later times. In later times, too, instead of the regular clergyman's suit, he wore the usual citizen's suit.

He was very systematic and regular in his hab-

its. In the management of the house everything was under strict system. He was very regular in the matter of family worship. The first part of every Friday it was his custom to fast, and during this time he always remained at home. On Friday afternoons he met his catechetical class. Among the children he was always tender, solicitous, and impressive.

Toward the close of his life he always went to Andrew Bruner's on Friday evenings, and there took his evening meal. Mr. Bruner was for some time a member of his vestry. He was a sugar-refiner, and always kept Mr. Otterbein supplied with loaf-sugar, of which he was very fond. It was his way to take the sugar into his mouth and then drink his coffee over it, a habit in which he was not alone. A daughter of Andrew Bruner, Mrs. Hoffman, still living at the age of eighty-six years, remembers much of Mr. Otterbein. She was baptized and catechised by him.

After a time it was thought that Mr. Otterbein ought to have a better parsonage. When the street that ran west of the church was changed from its diagonal course, considerable space was left in front of the church, which was afterward used for building-sites. On the corner above the church a commodious and substantial parsonage was erected. Mr. Otterbein, however, preferred

to stay in the cottage, and directed that the new parsonage should be rented, and the money given to the poor.

His kindness toward the poor manifested itself in constant deeds of charity. Two old ladies that were members of his church, Mrs. Rupp and Mrs. Hess, he almost kept out of his private means.

The following is an example of his liberal spirit: A suit of clothing was much worn, and his friends sent him cloth for a new suit. Still the old garments were worn. When asked if his tailor had forgotten him, he wiped a tear from his eye, and pointed to some indigent persons opposite his house. After this incident, some of his friends frequently furnished him with suitable kinds of cloth for distribution.

Another incident, showing that with him true humanity and true Christianity were one, may be given. He frequently called upon John Hildt, a member of his vestry that had a conveyance, and said: "John, hitch up; I will ride out." He then would have him drive from one store to another, to stores belonging to persons out of the church as well as to those belonging to his own members. He would ask the owners in a plain simple way to give him so much flour, sugar, or cloth, as the case might be; and so great was his influence over the people in general, that his

requests were never refused. He would have Mr. Hildt take him from one poor person to another, until the several cases of want were relieved. He would then say, "Now John, drive me home again." This same course he would repeat as often as similar cases of want presented themselves.

His kindness of heart showed itself in many other ways. Major George Grandstaff, who died in 1878 at the age of ninety-one, was sometimes sent, when a boy, to bring Mr. Otterbein from Hagerstown, Maryland, to meetings that were appointed in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, the distance between the points being eighty-five miles. He often related how, when the weather was bad, Mr. Otterbein took him between his knees and wrapped his great coat about him.

The same disposition expressed itself in the form of a general principle on another occasion. A boy had been sent by his father to take him from York County, Pennsylvania, back to Baltimore. During a slight rain the carriage was driven up before a substantial farm-house, where Mr. Otterbein had frequently stopped. A low fence in front was to be crossed by walking over inclined planks, leaning from each side to the top of the fence. As the man that came out to greet them started down the incline, his feet, from the

slipperiness of the plank, went out from under him, and he came down flat upon his back. This was too much for the boy, and he broke out into an unrestrained laugh. Mr. Otterbein turned to him with a look that at once subdued his mirth, and said in words that the boy always remembered, "Never laugh at another person's misfortune."

With some of the boys that were thus sent to take Mr. Otterbein back and forth the task was not so pleasant. Some had a fear of him because he seemed to them such a holy man, and because he talked to them in regard to their souls. Also, when unconverted men took him from place to place he pressed the matter of their salvation so upon them that, as some of them expressed it, it seemed that the end of the journey and the chance to get away from his dreaded presence would never come. Some of them did not get away from the dread that he inspired until they were new creatures in Christ.

In the family, Mr. Otterbein was always sociable, taking notice of every person present, even to the youngest. He frequently visited Rev. Adam Ettinger's. Mr. Ettinger had been a minister in the Reformed Church, but afterward sided with the United Brethren. His son, also named Adam, afterward a minister among the followers

of Jacob Albright, relates that as Mr. Otterbein was making the acquaintance of the different members of the family he came to him. He then said, "And what is your name?" "Adam," was the reply. "Adam?" said Mr. Otterbein. "Oh! Adam ate the apple." While always making himself agreeable, he yet always inspired reverence and esteem.

When spending an evening at a place his custom was, when the hour for worship came, to call about him the members of the family and any others that might be present; and he then would read a portion of God's word. He would then inquire separately of each one old enough to understand such matters in regard to his or her religious state. He would then give such advice and instruction as the case of each seemed to require. After this acquaintance with the condition of each he would offer a prayer in which the wants of all would be remembered.

Mr. Otterbein's preaching has already been referred to, under different forms. Yet an incident or two in this line may be added. The following was related by an old lady, who, when a girl, heard him preach in Hagerstown. "I never saw him or heard him preach except that one time. He was not what I would call a loud speaker, though he spoke plainly and with much power.

He preached on repentance and the way of salvation, and I never heard the way laid down so plainly as he laid it down that day. I was forced to weep all the time that he was preaching. I well remember as he closed the Bible how he stretched his hands out toward the congregation and said, 'This is the way, and long have I desired to come and to tell you of it.' Some did not like the sermon, but it was the first sermon that reached my heart."

When very old, he was once preaching to an out-door audience, and as he proceeded, owing perhaps in part to the difficulties under which he spoke, his bodily strength became almost fully exhausted. He raised his eyes and hands toward heaven and exclaimed, "O Lord, help me this one time more to preach thy word." From this point in his sermon on to its close he was able to speak with great spirit and power.

A very ludicrous incident, and certainly an unsafe one for imitation, is the following: He was preaching at one time against great odds. He had both the oppressiveness of the day and the drowsiness of the audience to labor against. He was used to speaking to open ears. Though generally so serious and decorous in his speech, he bethought to regain his audience by taking a course that they did not expect when they thought



that it was perfectly safe for them to drowse and trust him. He therefore reached to the back of his head, and then as if having found something there held it up before the audience, and in some lines that he must have learned in his playful boyhood thus addressed it:

“Du bist ein armes Thier und klein,  
Von Tod und Noth umgeben;  
Du saufst das Blut aus Mark und Bein  
Es kostet Dir dein Leben.  
Du bist eine Laus und keine Kuh,  
Ich druecke Dir die Kehle zu—  
Hans Kasper Du must sterben!”

Neglecting some of the requirements of verse, it may be rendered as follows:

“You are a poor small creature  
By death and want surrounded.  
You draw the blood from bone and marrow;  
It costs you, sir, your life.  
You are a louse and nothing more;  
And now I choke you at your throat:  
Hans Kasper, you must die.”

As he closed the quotation he brought his thumb-nails together in a way understood by all. From this point in his discourse on, his audience kept both eyes and ears open.

Mr. Otterbein was an excellent pastor. His labors in this capacity went much beyond the circle of his members. He believed in personal labor, and in meeting men in the condition in

which they stood. His method with a skeptic will illustrate. A Mr. Zollicoffer, descended from a noble Swiss family, was skeptical, and brought his difficulties to Mr. Otterbein. This and that he could not understand. Mr. Otterbein asked him if he could understand how his finger-nails grew. It was difficult for the skeptic to see how so common a thought could have a bearing upon his difficulties. But as he reflected he was convinced of the folly of seeking first to remove all difficulties. He was converted soon afterward, and became one of Mr. Otterbein's principal members.

A fault-finding professor once visited him, and became garrulous in his complaints against his brethren. In the midst of his harangue, Mr. Otterbein touched him on the shoulder and said, "Stop, brother, I perceive that you have got into the devil's office!" meaning that he had become an accuser of the brethren.

Mr. Otterbein would not be the Otterbein of history if no smell of fire should be found on his clothes. A few incidents will be given showing some of his less happy experiences. He, in company with a man that in 1841 was still living in Baltimore, went out to a certain place where he was to preach. They found the doors and windows of the house all closed, and a large col-

lection of people outside. Otterbein asked, "Why is the church not opened?" The answer was, "We dare not hear you, for you are a Methodist." He did not wait to argue, but went upon the church steps and began to sing. While he sung the doors were opened, and he went in and preached, not failing to rebuke the people for their sins. One of the elders was a drunkard. In the midst of his remarks Mr. Otterbein said, "If a drunkard should meet a dog, he ought to lift his hat and say, 'Thou hast more sense than I.'" This was in the time before drugged liquors and the feverish life of more recent times had made it so difficult for men to control themselves. At the present time the chief odium is on the drink-seller. The effect of Mr. Otterbein's sermon—of the spirit back of it rather than of a few severe words in it—proved highly wholesome in the community.

The above instance was not the only case of Mr. Otterbein's being locked out of a church. Among other instances, he was locked out of the church at Sharpsburg, Maryland, on an occasion when he was to preach a funeral discourse.

At one time some opponents of Mr. Otterbein in Baltimore induced a person of vile character to give out reports damaging to his reputation, and then to go to one of his class-meetings to

face him down and to throw confusion into the meeting. But the effort was so far from successful that the bold sinner, under the spirit of the meeting, came under conviction and confessed to the conspiracy.

Mr. Otterbein was much given to speaking through figures or symbols. He once visited a Mr. Martina. During the conversation he asked him where he attended church. On receiving his answer Mr. Otterbein replied, "As the beast, so is the food." The answer continued to ring in Martina's ears, and finally led him to seek more and truer light. He became a sincere Christian and a very active worker.

Mr. Otterbein was once asked what he thought of the use of an organ in church. He replied that it put him in mind of a boy in the street riding a stick. In other words, the organ would not help much.

At one time there was trouble in a Methodist church in Baltimore over the introduction of an organ. The case was referred to Otterbein for decision. His decision was against the use of the instrument, and this decision was accepted by all concerned.

A minister once asked him what he thought of introducing political matters into the pulpit. He answered, "He that goes upon the sea will be

tossed about by the waves, and whether he will get to shore time must determine."

His opinion of freemasonry will be of interest to many. The subject was once brought up in his vestry. Otterbein answered: "A freemason can not be a Christian," which settled the question. He perhaps meant that if a man understood the real character of freemasonry and the real character of Christianity, he could not combine within himself the elements of the two. Notwithstanding the many differences in regard to this and kindred subjects, that, in recent times, have appeared in the church that Otterbein was the chief instrument in founding, the spirit of Otterbein's view is everywhere regarded in the cases of ministers, if not everywhere in the cases of the laity,—the ministers being persons that are supposed to be able to discern between moral unlikes, and that are supposed to be leaders into that that is good, and not misleaders of souls. Mr. Wesley, whose parallel with Otterbein can be shown at a hundred points, gives the following in his journal: "I went to Ballymena and read a strange tract that professes to discover the inmost recesses of freemasonry, said to be 'translated from the French original lately published at Berlin.' I incline to think it is a genuine account. Only if it be, I wonder that the author is suffered

to live. If it be, what an amazing banter upon all mankind is freemasonry!" Toward the close of the eighteenth century freemasonry was abhorred and feared in Germany, and was shunned and suspected by all classes of Germans in America.


As an offset against any undue praise, and as a specific against undue exaltation of the past, what may be called unfavorable incidents or facts may not be without a value. A few such facts connected with the life of Mr. Otterbein, all that are known to the writer, are these: Otterbein had the habit of smoking. Many occupying similar stations used tobacco in some form, Bishop Asbury among the number. Likewise, along with even the best men of the times, Otterbein's temperance principles, though strongly marked, did not prevent him from allowing to stimulants, under strict limits, a permissible place. Another fact, not at the time regarded as at all derogatory, is that when in 1789 the tower to the Baltimore church was to be erected and the bells purchased, by a special act of the Maryland legislature, permission was given for the raising of money by a lottery. Many churches in Pennsylvania and Maryland received like "acts of grace," as any one can see by looking through the documents belonging to that period. Lotteries were

not then what they have been in more recent times. But let no one frame an apology for tobacco, stimulants, or lotteries. Let us be grateful that our age, on all these subjects, can show an improved sentiment.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### OTTERBEIN'S EXTANT PAPERS.

Scanty Literary Remains — Destroyed his Papers — Letter on Doctrine and Discipline — Letter on the Millennium — Letter on the Theater — Letter to an Intemperate Man — Latin Sermons — Sermon Sketch — Books.

R. Otterbein wrote little, and of this little the very least has been handed down. His disinclination to writing appears in the brevity and condensation of his entries in the church-books at the various places where he served as pastor. He was a preacher, and not a writer. When he wrote it was to serve a present practical purpose. A number of letters written by him were preserved for a time, but outside of what have already been inserted or referred to, only about half a dozen are known to now be in existence. The original autographs of four of these are preserved at the publishing house of the United Brethren in Christ, at Dayton, Ohio. Many letters written by him were doubtless, at the time of his death and for a time afterward, in the hands of individuals in different places. It is scarcely strange that so few of these are now extant.



What is strange is that of papers that must have been in his own hands scarcely anything remains. Letters written to him by various persons, some records of his work, and papers on different subjects must, to some extent at least, have been collected in his hands. His aversion to writing, and the indisposition of some persons of his type of mind to preserve papers after their first use has been served, would account for scanty remains, but not for such a complete absence of papers of these several classes. Only one letter to him has been handed down. This was a letter written by a German count. His goods were divided out; yet many of his books along with a few articles belonging to the house were left at the parsonage, and if papers had been in existence they would have been preserved at the same place. Little care was taken, however, by his successors, of what was left at the parsonage. Yet if there had been papers stored away, there would certainly have been some mark of their subsequent history.

All of this lends support to the statement purporting to have come from Rev. John Hildt, that Mr. Otterbein, within the last year of his life, in the presence of Mr. Hildt, destroyed his papers. There seems to be no room to doubt that some papers, at least, were thus destroyed. The fact

that Mr. Otterbein a short time before he died turned over to John Hildt simply his ordination certificate, and perhaps his letter of recommendation from the Herborn faculty, seems to indicate that a few papers of this character were the only ones that were selected for preservation. The reasons for his course were doubtless his well-known modesty, and his determination to leave his reputation, as well as the work of his life, to that Providence to whom he had committed his life, his all.

The four letters referred to above will now be given. Some of them, perhaps all of them, were gathered by Rev. Wm. Brown, who between 1825 and 1828 was pastor of Otterbein's congregation in Baltimore, and who between 1833 and 1837 held the office of bishop. The letter immediately following was written in German, and is without date or signature. It appears to be one of several letters written in reply to a captious opponent of the work in which he was engaged. The person addressed may have been a minister. The subjects presented in the letter are sanctification, justification, and church-discipline. On sanctification it will be seen that the view held accords with what is now generally termed the Wesleyan view. The letter is as follows:

You ask what sanctification is, and what is

accomplished thereby. Here the best thing for us to do would be that we both pray for the spirit of sanctification, since before we do this we can not by any means comprehend it. The word of God speaks, however, plainly enough, making a difference between justification and sanctification. And this difference accords also with reason; for, is it not one thing when Pharaoh takes Joseph from prison, and another when he enrobes him in kingly apparel and sets him a prince over the whole land of Egypt?

You ask what faith is, how we live by it, and how, through it, we live continually free from sin. That you descend so low as to ask what faith is astonishes me, especially as you otherwise are so high-minded. But what it is to live by faith, let your children, who perform the duties the mother enjoins, and who live meantime without caring for bread, tell you. He that denies the possibility of living without sin, denies God, and deserves no other answer than the one the Savior gave the Sadducees—"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." (Matthew xxii. 29.)

That there is a difference, too, between conversion and sanctification we have eternal witness in the Bible and the types therein contained. God acts according to his free and unlimited power

and wisdom, calling one directly, another indirectly; pulling some at once fully from destruction as a brand from the burning, while with others the work proceeds more slowly.

Concerning the assurance of the forgiveness of sins, and wherein the same consists, David gives us from his own experience sufficient information in Psalms xciv. 19, ciii. 3-5, cxvi. 1-8. And how plainly does Paul speak thereof in Romans v. 1-3, viii. 15-23. I have, however, never preached that a person must be converted in a moment, and consequently you blame me for something that has no foundation in fact.

That justification and the pardon of sin are one and the same gracious gift is clearly seen in Acts xiii. 38 and 39, and at that we shall have to leave it. The pardon of sin is a pronouncing just, a setting free. If, for instance, your neighbor owes you a sum of money, and he comes to your house with a friend that pays the money for him, what will you do. You will now acquit your neighbor. This you know. You ask how this is accomplished, and what faith we must have before we receive with certainty the pardon of sin. These are questions with which you discredit yourself not a little, and if you do not reveal ignorance, then the spirit of an impure mind. You ask how soon this work is accom-

plished. Do you mean what length of time God requires before he justifies the sinner or pardons his sin? Then I must tell you, you know not what you ask. But that I may not leave you in the dark, I will point you to the high-priest in the Old Testament, who pronounced the lepers clean. This will make it plain to you how soon God may pardon a man's sin. And if you are still unable to understand, then think of your neighbor whom you acquitted of his indebtedness as soon as his friend had paid the money for him. Then ask him if he knows that he is acquitted, and how long it was until he knew it.

But if the sense of your question is how much time the act itself of justification or pardon requires, then I must simply ask you again, how much time, how many hours or days did it require you to acquit your neighbor after his friend paid the debt for him? And if this is not sufficient, then ask a judge who by a grant of pardon spared the life of a thief, how many days he required for this purpose,—whether he acquitted the prisoner partly one day and partly the next, and so on until at length he was fully acquitted. I hope you may here see yourself in your ignorance.

On the matter of church-discipline you complain. I find the best discipline in Matthew xviii.,

and will in the future do all things in accordance therewith. Therefore your question on this point was unnecessary.

Your questions are herewith answered. You will likely think my answers unbecoming and derisive. I have for a long time spoken in a friendly way with you, and you have become unbecoming, and I find it now time to answer foolishness with foolishness. But I mock you not, but would show you that while you think yourself smart, you make yourself to scoff and mock.

The next letter, rather part of a letter, is on the subject of the millennium. It is written in English, and shows that Mr. Otterbein, at the time when it was written, had fairly mastered the English language. The words are appropriate and the constructions good. The orthography, though, represents the words as a German would pronounce them. The letter gives the generally-accepted doctrine on the subject presented. The following is the letter:

The subject upon which you request me to give my opinion has employed the minds of many pious men; and Christians are divided upon it. They generally believe—and that is my opinion too—that there is in prospect a more glorious state of the church than ever has been; and this we call

the millennium. Some of them believe that Christ will personally reign in his church on earth a thousand years; but the best and most judicious divines do not believe that. And in this I agree with them. And, with respect to the resurrection of David, I do not see one sentence in divine revelation to countenance this opinion.

Some of the divines have gone so far as to fix the precise year when this glorious state of the church will begin. I think it wise in all to be cautious about forming opinions upon all subjects that the Scriptures do not decide. The divines agree that before this happy time the antichrist, the man of sin, will appear (II. Thessalonians ii. 3, 4), and that in his time Christians will be persecuted—the antichrist will persecute them—in a manner they never have been persecuted from the foundation of the world.

It appears from revelation, and it is the opinion of the best divines, that before the millennium begins the seven vials of the wrath of God will be poured out, and that the scattered Jews will be, must be gathered, and the fullness of the gentiles brought in, before the millennium can be accomplished in its full extent. It is certain that these great events will come, and they seem to be at the door. The prophecies will be fulfilled, and they are fulfilling from day to day, and you may live

to see great things. But what to do now? Hear what Christ says: "Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." And that is the best thing we can do—make our calling and election sure. The grace of the Lord be with you. My respects to Mr. Hubler, your father, mother, and sister.

Your obedient servant,

W. OTTERBEIN.

The next letter, also written in English, is on the subject of the theater. On the 26th day of December, 1811, the theater at Richmond, Virginia, took fire during an exhibition, and seventy-two persons lost their lives. The wife and daughter of a cousin of Mr. Otterbein were among the unfortunate votaries of pleasure that thus came to an untimely death. The present letter was written by Mr. Otterbein to his cousin soon after his great bereavement.

BALTIMORE, February 16th, 1812.

DEAR COUSIN:—I lament the untimely death of your beloved wife and daughter. It is shocking to think of it. A hundred immortal souls have been hurried, and that unexpectedly, in less than an hour's time, into an awful eternity! Did that happen by chance? The wicked and unbelieving may imagine it. The Christian, who believes in a



world-governing God, and in the divinity of the Bible, sees the hand of the Almighty, without whose will not one hair could fall from our head, even on such a calamitous night. Do the inhabitants of Richmond see this? I wish they may, but I fear not many will. The committee made a resolve to abstain from all worldly pleasure—dancing, for example—for four months. Only four months! And what afterward? May they then play and dance again? It seems so. But this appears from another resolve: the committee hope that their calamity will be a warning, that no theater should be permitted to be opened until every facility has been provided for the escape of the audience. Oh, shame! How God-offending and God-mocking is this resolve. If they had made a resolve against the building of another play-house, they would have done honor to themselves, to God, and to religion.

And what do the play-actors say? It is surprising! They are sorry; and what for? Is it for the souls that perished on that terrible night, and of whose blood they are guilty? By no means. These deluded and hardened sinners are sorry but for the loss they have suffered. They are afraid that they will be banished from Richmond. Oh, may this prove to be true! Oh, that **you actors** may be banished, not only from Rich-

mond, but from every town and city in America! The angels in heaven would rejoice at this. Woe unto you, you devoted servants of the devil! Unhappy men! You have destroyed hundreds in Richmond. You are guilty of their blood, and the righteous God will certainly require it from your hands in the day of judgment. Tremble! Oh, tremble! How will you escape the damnation of hell except you turn and repent? May the Lord give you grace.

And what do you say, my dear cousin? You have lost a beloved wife and a dear child. Do you see and feel the hand that lies so heavy on you? I know you do. But do you see and feel that terrible evil, the sin, that brought this calamity upon you? Awake! my dear cousin, awake! The Lord has blessed you with the temporal things of this world. But what are all these but vanity? I know you would give your houses and all your silver if you could call back your wife and child. It is impossible. Thank God that you are alive yet. Adore the hand that has afflicted you. Pray for grace. Oh, don't neglect that! Cry aloud! The Lord is merciful. Pray for grace to repent and believe.

W. OTTERBEIN.

The remaining letter was addressed to a man that in 1804 was a member of Mr. Otterbein's church in Baltimore, but that afterward left Bal-

timore, and fell into intemperate habits. While the letter says nothing of total abstinence in general,—the necessity of this not at that time being generally apprehended,—it certainly discourses total abstinence to persons in the condition of the person addressed. The letter was written in German, and for energy of exhortation and godly interest in an insnared soul, it furnishes a truly lofty example. The letter will be given in German, as well as in English, in deference to the request of certain friends, who desire to have some of the expressions of Otterbein in his original German.

BALTIMORE, Juni 5, 1807.

FREUND HOEFLICH!—Soviel Muehe mir auch das Schreiben machet, so bin ich in meinem Gewissen gedrungen dieses wenige zu schreiben. Ich habe wohl nichts weniger vermuthet, denn von Zeit zu Zeit solche unangenehme Nachricht zu erhalten. Ihr seid, seitdem Ihr Baltimore verlassen habt, dem starken Getraenk ueber die Maszen ergeben. Ihr waret schon bei einigen eurer Freunden, da Ihr noch bei uns waret, deswegen in Verdacht; da wir aber nicht gewiss davon waren, daher hoffeten wir, es geschaech Euch Unrecht an dem, somit, dass wir besser von Euch gedacht denn es war. O, wie sehr kraenkt uns das! Ueberall muessen wir hoeren, der Hoeflich

ist ein grosser Saeufer. Ists moeglich! Ein Mann der die Wahrheit erkennt und bekennet, ist so schrecklich verfallen. Das haben wir nicht vermuthet. Wir hofften, Ihr wuerdet ein Salz in eurer Nachbarschaft sein, ein Licht und Leiter. Es ist das Gegentheil. Mein Freund, Ihr bringet Euch in Unglueck. Ihr kraenket eure Familie, eure Kinder verachten Euch. Doch das ist das Wenigste. Ein Mann der Gott mit dem Munde bekennet, und verleugnet Ihn mit seinen Werken, das ist schrecklich. O, Hoeflich! Ihr gehet verloren. Das ist nicht alles; Ihr schadet dem Christenthum, und indem Ihr den Gottlosen in seinen Suenden steifet, so reizet Ihr Andere, und machet Euch an Ihrem Blute schuldig, damit Ihr Euch ein schreckliches Urtheil zuziehet. Erzittert, und schlaget in Euch. Entweder muesset Ihr Euch entschliessen zur Hoelle zu gehen, oder Ihr muesset aufgeben. Es ist nicht anders, und das wisset Ihr und glaubet es. Hoeflich! Hoeflich! Bessert Euch schnell. Gebet auf. Es ist Zeit. Gebet auf, sonst wird Euch Gott aufgeben, und dann, O wehe! Ihr fraget: Ist mir denn noch zu helfen? Es ist, ja es ist. Eure Kraft ist zu wenig; die Kraft des Allmaechtigen aber vermags. Ihr muesset aber das starke Getraenk aufgeben. Ihr muesset es ganz aufgeben. Und duerft Ihr Euch besinnen? Ists nicht besser hier Durst leiden

denn in der Hoelle duersten, und das ewig, und Pein leiden. O, entschliesset Euch. Das muss Ich Euch sagen: Ihr werdet Arbeit kriegen. Der Satan wird Euch nicht so leicht los geben. Indessen duerft Ihr nicht bange sein. Der allmaechtige Heiland wird Euch beistehen. Wagets auf Ihn, Er wird Euch durchhelfen. Betet, betet, ruft laut, haltet an. Sagets eurer Frau und Kinder, sagets euren werthen Freunden dass sie Euch helfen beten.

O, wie viel besser waeret Ihr mit eurer Familie in Baltimore geblieben. Da war dieser hoellische Geist noch gebunden. Ach, Gott wolle sich ueber Euch erbarmen. Das ist mein Wunsch und Gebet fuer Euch und euer Haus. Ich gruesse Euch und euer Haus, die Christina, die Mary, Grimbel, Wahl, und alle andern. W. OTTERBEIN.

TRANSLATION.

BALTIMORE, June 5, 1807.

FRIEND HOEFLICH:—Although writing causes me much trouble, I feel bound in my conscience to write to you these few lines. I had not thought to receive from time to time such unpleasant news from you. You are, since you left Baltimore, above all measure in the habit of using strong drink. Some of your friends had a suspicion of your drinking while you were yet in Baltimore; but as we were not sure about it we

hoped you were wronged in this, because we thought much better of you than the facts warranted.

Oh, this pains us very much. We must hear all around, "Hoefflich is a great drunkard." Is it possible! A man that knows the truth and confesses it fallen so awfully! This we had not expected. We hoped that you would be salt in your neighborhood—a light and leader. Alas! it is to the contrary.

My friend, you bring yourself into great calamity. You bring sorrow upon your family. Your children will despise, scorn you. But that is the least consideration. For a man to profess God with his mouth and to deny him with his works—that is awful. O Hoefflich, you will be lost. But that is not all. You hurt the cause of Christ; and besides strengthening the wicked in their ways, you entice others and become a partaker of their sins, and make yourself guilty of their blood, whereby you bring upon yourself an awful judgment. Tremble, and turn! You must either decide to go to hell or give up drinking. There is no other way; and this you know and believe. Hoefflich, O Hoefflich, turn quickly. Leave off; it is time. Give up drinking; otherwise God will give you up, and then, oh, woe!

You ask, "Is there any help for me?" There

can be; there must be; there is. Your strength is too feeble; but the power of the Almighty is sufficient. But you must give up strong drink. You must give it up entirely. And dare you hesitate? Is it not much better to suffer thirst in this world than to thirst in hell through eternity? Oh, resolve to quit drinking.

One thing I must tell you, Satan will not let you loose very easily. But you need not fear. The almighty Savior will help you. Venture upon him; he will sustain you. Pray, pray; call aloud; persevere. Tell your wife and children, tell your dear friends, to help you pray.

Oh, how much better would it have been if you had stayed with your family in Baltimore. At the time when you were here this hellish spirit was yet bound. Oh that the Lord may have mercy upon you, is my wish and prayer, for you and your house. I greet you and your family; also, Christina, Mary, Grimbel, Wahl, and others.

Your friend,

W. OTTERBEIN.

A small manuscript-volume of Latin sermons that was left by Mr. Otterbein in the parsonage is believed to belong to the period of his preparation for the ministry, or to the time of his ministry in Germany. The book was preserved until 1853, but can not now be found. Prof. John

Haywood, in 1851, examined the collection, and translated one of the sermons. This sermon was based upon II. Peter ii. 4-9, with special reference to the 9th verse. Its aim was edification. Mr. Otterbein's Latin scholarship is well attested. He read the Latin down to the time of his death with as much ease as his own vernacular. He was likewise thoroughly conversant with the Hebrew and Greek. He was also acquainted with the Dutch, and must have had some knowledge of the French.

We have but one sermon sketch coming from Otterbein. It is the outline of a sermon preached by him at the conference of 1801. As Mr. Otterbein selected his texts with great judgment, the text used on that occasion will be quoted entire, in connection with the brief outline that has been handed down. His text was Jude twentieth to the twenty-fifth verse inclusive:

"20. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.

"21. Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

"22. And of some have compassion, making a difference :

"23 And others save with fear, pulling them



out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

“24. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

“25. To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

The leading topics of this discourse were:

1. The sanctity of the ministerial office.
2. The character of the men that should take upon them this office. They must be men of faith, of prayer, and full of the Holy Ghost.
3. The duties of the office.
4. Its great responsibilities.

With reference to this discourse of Otterbein, Newcomer wrote: “The force with which he pointed out the greatness, the importance, and the responsibility of the ministerial office will never be forgotten by me.”

It is said that Mr. Otterbein possessed a large library. He certainly esteemed books. When the second volume of his brother's work (George Godfrey's) on the Heidelberg Catechism was published, he had fifty copies brought to this country. Of his books there yet remain a few at Baltimore. One of these is a history of the martyrs, published in 1571. The list begins


with Abel and closes with an account of Melancthon. Another work is the Berleburg Bible-commentary on the Old Testament. This is a mystical work, but it contains much that is good. At Berleburg, where this commentary was produced, John Daniel Otterbein served, in different capacities, for a number of years. Others of Mr. Otterbein's books are preserved at different places.

From the contents of this chapter it will be sufficiently evident that the services of Mr. Otterbein were not in the line of literature. His whole power was exerted immediately upon men and upon the features of the times. His life was a constant grapple with forces that were to be overcome and with souls that were to be won.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### OTTERBEIN'S LAST YEAR.

Asbury's Visit—Newcomer in Baltimore—Ordination of Newcomer, Hoffman, and Schaffer—Dr. Harbaugh's Views—Wm. Ryland—The Last Hour—The Last Words—The Funeral—Those Participating—His Age—His Tomb—His Congregation—His Will—Tributes of Asbury, Dr. B. Kurtz, Dr. Zacharias, and John Hildt—Henry Boehm's Description—Pictures of Otterbein—His Life-Work—His Retrospect—His Vision of the Future—The Key to His Life—His Name Growing Brighter—Recent Words—His Answers to Asbury's Questions—His Aim and Reward.

ARCH 22d, 1813, Bishop Asbury came to Baltimore. In the evening he called upon Mr. Otterbein and remained over night with him. He made the following entry in his journal: "I gave an evening to the great Otterbein. I found him happy and placid in God. He says the commentators are mistaken—that the vials are yet to be poured out." Almost every man that meets this wicked world face to face asks himself, What is to be the outcome? Some persons suddenly roused from deep slumber form untenable and pernicious theories as to the future. Yet at least a partial view of what is in reserve for our world,

drawn in spirit and substance from the Scriptures, is important for all. Mr. Otterbein often turned to the Scriptures, and, by the aid of prophecy, sought to forecast the character of the times to come. Henry Boehm, who was with Bishop Asbury at Mr. Otterbein's, says, "This was an evening I shall ever remember. Two noble souls met, and their conversation was rich and full of instruction. They had met frequently before; this was their last interview on earth."

A few days after this interview Christian Newcomer and Christian Crum visited Mr. Otterbein in Baltimore. June 19th Mr. Newcomer was again in Baltimore. He says: "Found Father Wm. Otterbein weak and feeble in body, but his mental powers as strong as ever." This statement ought to be an abundant answer to the statement made by some writers that "in the latter part of his life his judgment failed." Mr. Newcomer during his visit preached in Mr. Otterbein's church, as also did Mr. Dashields, an Episcopal minister, of whom we shall hear more presently.

From this time until October, Mr. Otterbein's health continued gradually to fail. Yet he was able, for the most of the time, to attend to his ministerial duties. He was sinking from old age. His fund of vitality was gone. To the weakness

of old age there was added a distressing asthmatic affection. Not long before the first of October Rev. Frederick Schaffer, one of the fruits of Mr. Otterbein's ministry at Lancaster, "in a particularly providential way," came to Baltimore, and from this time forward Mr. Otterbein was relieved from the work of preaching. The news of Mr. Otterbein's failing health was everywhere heard with sorrow by his brethren. Deep concern in regard to the future of the work begun, filled the hearts of the brethren in Ohio. It was everywhere desired that before Father Otterbein should depart he should give to the brethren raised up under him formal ordination by the laying on of hands. They had specifically received the privilege to administer the sacraments. Along with Otterbein they had administered the sacrament of the Lord's-supper at Baltimore and elsewhere. They had even officiated in the administering of this ordinance at Methodist meetings along with Methodist bishops. But the contempt that was by some heaped upon their ministerial functions would be still greater when Otterbein should be taken away.

When news reached Joseph Hoffman, already so useful and subsequently so mighty in the ministry, that Father Otterbein was dangerously ill, he determined to visit Mr. Newcomer, who lived

ninety miles distant, and consult him as to the propriety of their going to Baltimore and receiving formal ordination before the departure of Father Otterbein. Mr. Newcomer consented to go, though the matter of receiving ordination does not seem to have so much concerned him. October 1st they arrived in Baltimore. The account of what followed will be given in Mr. Newcomer's words: "Old Father Otterbein is weak and feeble in body, but strong and vigorous in spirit, and full of hope of a blissful immortality and eternal life. He was greatly rejoiced at our arrival. He informed me that he had received a letter from the brethren in the West,\* wherein he was requested to ordain me, by the laying on of hands, to the office of elder and preacher of the gospel, before his departure, adding, 'I have always considered myself too unworthy to perform this solemn injunction of the apostle, but now I perceive the necessity of doing so before I shall be removed.' He then inquired whether I had any objection to make, and if not, whether the present would not be a suitable time. I replied that I firmly believed solemn ordination to the ministry had been enjoined and practiced by the apostles; therefore, if, in his opinion, the performance of the act would be thought necessary

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\* According to a formal resolution adopted by the conference in Ohio.

and beneficial, I had no objection to make whatever, but would cheerfully consent—only one observation I wished to make; as Brothers Joseph Hoffman and Frederick Schaffer were present, that he should ordain them at the same time. To this he readily assented, and immediately appointed the following day for the performance of this solemn duty.—2d. This afternoon the vestry and several other members of the church assembled at the house of Father Otterbein. The venerable man addressed us in so spiritual and powerful a manner that all beheld him with astonishment. It appeared as if he had received particular unction from above to perform this solemn act. After addressing a throne of grace with great fervency for a blessing, he called upon Bro. Wm. Ryland, an elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who had been invited for the purpose, to assist him in the ordination. We were accordingly ordained to the office of elders in the ministry, by the laying on of hands. John Hildt, a member of the vestry, had been appointed secretary. He executed certificates of ordination to each of us, in the German and English languages, which certificates were then signed by Father William Otterbein, and delivered to each of us. At night we preached in the church. I lodged with Otterbein.”

The following is a copy of one of these ordination certificates:

Know all men whom it may concern that Joseph Hoffman, this 2d day of October, 1813, in the presence of the subscribers, leaders of the congregation in Baltimore, by the Rev. William Otterbein, in conjunction with, and with the assistance of William Ryland, an elder of the Methodist society in Baltimore, by the laying on of hands, is duly and solemnly ordained. We desire and pray that his labors in the vineyard of the Lord may prove a blessing to many souls.

Given this 2d day of October, 1813.

(WITNESS.)

JOHN HILDT, Secretary.

WILLIAM BACKER.

{ SEAL. }

BALTZER SCHAEFFER.

{ SEAL. }

GOTTFRIED SUMWALT.

{ SEAL. }

*A True Copy.*

JACOB SMITH.

{ SEAL. }

WILLIAM OTTERBEIN.

Mr. Otterbein delivered his address to the candidates sitting in an arm-chair, to which it had been necessary to assist him. One point in his address was a solemn injunction against being precipitate in the ordinations that it would devolve upon them to confer. He had again to be assisted when he rose to his feet to place his hands on the heads of the candidates. Through the ordination of these three ministers, especially of Mr. Newcomer and Mr. Hoffman, both of



whom served as bishops, ordination has been conveyed to several thousand ministers—to all, indeed, that have been ordained in the United Brethren Church.

The presence and assistance of Rev. Wm. Ryland, of the Methodist Church, recalls the presence and assistance of Mr. Otterbein at the consecration of Bishop Asbury. Concerning Mr. Ryland a few words will be in place. By birth he was an Irishman. He became a traveling preacher in 1802. He was five times elected chaplain of the United States senate. He was pronounced by the statesman Wm. Pinckney the greatest pulpit orator he had ever heard. General Jackson greatly admired him, and gave him a chaplain's commission in the United States navy. In this position he served for the last seventeen years of his life. He was a man of precious spirit. No more suitable man could have been chosen by Mr. Otterbein.

Dr. Harbaugh's views as to Otterbein's seeing the necessity of giving "validity to an abnormal ministry" by ordination conferred at the last moment, as to his holding on to the religious movement, "not to organize it, but to prevent its organization," as to his "silently mourning" over mistakes made in "the heat of former enthusiasm," and so forth,—these views, did they

possess a grain of serious foundation, would be entitled to a careful consideration. His views and theories on these points, however, are the purest fiction. That Mr. Otterbein was acting cordially and positively in solemnly ordaining three of his brethren, was characteristic of the spirit of his life, and in full accord with all of his later acts. The reason for his not ordaining at an earlier time was his characteristic humility, and not a belief that it would be improper. Nor did the necessity for conveying formal ordination first, at this time, come into his mind. He said, "I have always considered myself too unworthy to perform this solemn injunction of the apostle."

The day following this ordination, it being Sunday, Mr. Hoffman and Mr. Newcomer preached in Mr. Otterbein's church, and Mr. Schaffer assisted them in administering the sacrament. "A great many persons came to the table of the Lord with contrite hearts and streaming eyes." The following day Mr. Newcomer and Mr. Hoffman left the city. Otterbein exhorted them to faithfulness, told them that God would be with them, and carry forward the good work through their instrumentality. His last words to them were, "Farewell. If any inquire after me, tell them I die in the faith I have preached."

For nearly six weeks Mr. Otterbein continued slowly to fail. It now became evident that the last hour had come. Rev. Dr. Kurtz, of the Lutheran Church, offered up at his bedside the last vocal prayer, at the close of which Otterbein responded, "Amen, amen: it is finished." His last quotation from scripture was, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." It now appeared that he was on the verge of departing, but rallying once more he said slowly and distinctly, "Jesus, Jesus,—I die, but thou livest, and soon I shall live with thee." Then, addressing his friends, he continued, "The conflict is over and past. I begin to feel an unspeakable fullness of love and peace divine. Lay my head upon my pillow, and be still." Spayth adds, "Stillness reigned in the chamber of death, —no, not of death, the chariot of Israel had come. 'See,' said one, 'how sweet, how easy he breathes.' A smile, a fresh glow lighted up his countenance, and behold it was death.

'He taught us how to live, and, oh! too high  
A price of knowledge, taught us how to die.'"

It is scarcely too much to say that in the long list of dying utterances of eminent saints nothing can be found more profoundly fitting or truly sublime than the dying words of Otterbein. When

the scaffolding of our earthly life is rudely struck by the hand of Death, there is no foundation of hope anywhere, no principle of life anywhere, save in Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life. That he lives is the pledge of our resurrection, yea, the pledge that we shall not die. In Otterbein's death it seemed that eternity overlapped, beyond its wont, the shore pressed by aching hearts and tired feet. It is better to die under the hush of the Almighty than to be occupied to the last moment with cares and labors unwisely, perhaps perilously deferred. Otterbein died as he lived — with commanding composure and subdued greatness.

His death took place at ten P. M., on Wednesday, November 17th, 1813. The funeral services took place on Saturday morning. The body was carried into the church at a quarter before ten o'clock. At ten o'clock Rev. J. D. Kurtz, of the Lutheran church, Otterbein's friend and for twenty-seven years his co-laborer in Baltimore, preached a discourse in German from Matthew xx.: 8 — "Call the laborers and give them their hire." It was a fitting text for one that had spent sixty-five years in the ministry. After the discourse in German by Dr. Kurtz, Rev. Wm. Ryland, of the Methodist Church, spoke in English. The members of the different churches in

the city were in attendance in large numbers. Almost all of the ministers of the city were present. Rev. George Dashields, of the Episcopal Church, conducted the ceremony at the grave.

Let us notice those that, doubtless by Mr. Otterbein's arrangement, took the leading part in these solemnities. Dr. Kurtz was the son of Rev. J. N. Kurtz, Otterbein's neighbor at Tulpehocken. His character is illustrated by a remark that he made. He was told that the Methodists were organizing churches among German Lutherans. He replied, "And is it not better that they should go to heaven as Methodists, than to be neglected and overlooked as Lutherans?" He was one of the founders of the General Synod of the Lutheran Church, which has always been noted for its evangelical character.

Rev. George Dashields, though an Episcopalian, often preached for Mr. Otterbein. He also to some extent made itinerant tours, and sometimes visited and co-operated with the German evangelists. His revival tendencies seem to have been disapproved, and to have excited opposition in the church to which he belonged. In 1816 he changed his church-relations. The character of Rev. Mr. Ryland has already been referred to.

It will be observed that none of Mr. Otterbein's co-workers among the United Brethren took a

part in the funeral services. Frederick Schaffer, though beloved by Otterbein and the congregation, could better take the place of a mourner. Christian Newcomer, Joseph Hoffman, Christian Crum, and Jacob Baulus were specially engaged in Pennsylvania. When Mr. Newcomer reached home and found a letter informing him of the death of Otterbein he wrote, "He is called to his everlasting home, where he rests from his labors, and his works will follow him." No Reformed minister took part in the services. Rev. Christian L. Becker was still serving as pastor of the Reformed Church.

When Bishop Asbury received the sad news of the death of his friend he exclaimed, "Is Father Otterbein dead? Great and good man of God! An honor to his church and country. One of the greatest scholars and divines that ever came to America, or born in it. Alas, the chiefs of the Germans are gone to their rest and reward, taken from the evil to come."

At the time of his death he was eighty-seven years, five months, and fourteen days of age. He had been a minister sixty-five years, reckoning from the time he became a candidate; or reckoning from his ordination, sixty-four years. He was buried in the yard by the side of the church, between the church and Conway Street, at the

right of the entrance from the street. A large marble slab rests flat upon the grave, and over this, supported by four square pillars at the corners, rests a second slab. The inscription to his memory is on this second horizontal slab.

After his decease his congregation continued to be served by Rev. Frederick Schaffer until the next meeting of the United Brethren conference, when a committee from the congregation made a full report to the conference of the facts connected with his death, and presented the request of the congregation that a minister be sent them by the conference. This was according to the wish of Otterbein.

Mr. Otterbein's liberality had been such as to leave little property to be disposed of by will. The only items in his will looking to his individual property are the following: "I desire that my just debts and funeral expenses may be paid as soon as may be after my decease." "I devise and give to Miss Elizabeth Drucks, now living in my family, and as a testimony of my esteem for her, the sum of fifty dollars. I give, devise, and bequeath all the residue of my property, personal or mixed, to my friend Elizabeth Schwope, as a small but the only compensation in my power for her faithful services and uncommon attention to me for many years past."

In March, 1814, four months after the death of Otterbein, Mr. Asbury came to Baltimore to attend the session of the Baltimore Conference. By request of the conference, and certainly at the hearty desire of the stricken congregation, he delivered in Otterbein's church a fitting discourse in memory of the departed. The following is the note that he made in his journal: "By request, I discoursed on the character of the angel of the church of Philadelphia, in allusion to William Otterbein, the holy, the great Otterbein, whose funeral discourse it was intended to be. Solemnity marked the silent meeting in the German church, where were assembled the members of our conference and many of the clergy of the city. Forty years have I known the retiring modesty of this man of God, towering majestic above his fellows, in learning, wisdom, and grace, yet seeking to be known only to God and the people of God."

A few additional testimonies, coming from widely-contrasted sources, will now be given. The following is from Dr. Benjamin Kurtz of the Lutheran Church: "Otterbein, that true and living witness, whose memory I hold dear, and cherish in my heart of hearts, was still laboring in faith and patience, and with great success, when I commenced preaching the gospel; but a



short time before my arrival in Baltimore, the Master had called him home. The pious part of the community still delighted in calling to mind his unctious sermons, his holy walk and conversation, and his wonderful success in winning sinners from the error of their ways, as well as in encouraging the weak and building up believers. My uncle, Rev. D. Kurtz, a true man of God, was a co-laborer of the sainted Otterbein, on terms of intimacy with him, and preached his funeral sermon. He often spoke to me about him, and always indicated the profound regard and ardent affection he entertained for him. In Washington County, Maryland, and in adjacent parts of Virginia (where I spent the first sixteen years of my ministry), Otterbein was well known. He frequently visited that section, and everywhere I met with living seals of his ministry. The devotion and enthusiasm with which those who had been converted under his preaching spoke of his power in the pulpit, of his spirit and holy conversation in personal intercourse, and of his untiring labors to lead sinners to Christ, was really refreshing, and filled my heart with love and admiration for that chosen and distinguished servant of the Lord. I knew a number of the early preachers who had been converted by Otterbein's instrumentality, and preached in company with

some of them, on funeral and other occasions. They were all men of God, and though not learned, like Otterbein (who was a scholar as well as a saint), they were faithful, devoted, and eminently useful. If ever there was a true revival-preacher, Otterbein was one."

Dr. Zacharias, the pastor of the Reformed church at Frederick, Maryland, wrote in 1847 the following: "Mr. Otterbein was a ripe scholar, and a devoted and pious man, who lived in God and God in him. By his agency a new life was brought into the church, at first as a mustard-seed, but later as a tree whose branches afforded a grateful resting-place to many. \* \* \* He was respected and revered even by those who disapproved of his measures, and throughout life his character stood unsullied by a single stain."

Before his toilsome career was brought to a close, his devotion to his life-work, his sacrifices, and manifold labors had won a recognition from even his opponents. He was blessed by the poor whose sad condition he had relieved from some of its shadows, and about him gathered with their kindly presence and pure-hearted appreciation the choicest spirits of the times. His fidelity had been put to the severest test, but at the last it was suitably and amply rewarded.

Mr. John Hildt's account of his first acquaint-

ance with Mr. Otterbein, about 1800, has such tenderness and life-likeness that it will be inserted in full: "Nearly half a century has passed since I became acquainted with Mr. Otterbein; and never will I forget the impression made upon my mind when I first saw and heard him. It was on Good Friday, in the forenoon, when, by the persuasion of a friend, I entered the church where he officiated. A venerable, portly old man, above six feet in height, erect in posture, apparently about seventy-five years of age, stood before me. He had a remarkably high and prominent forehead. Gray hair fell smooth down both sides of his head, on his temples. His eyes were large, blue, and piercing, and sparkled with the fire of love that warmed his heart. In his appearance and manners there was nothing repulsive, but all was attractive, and calculated to command the most profound attention and reverence. He opened his lips in prayer to Jehovah. Oh, what a voice!—what a prayer! Every word thrilled my heart. I had heard many prayers, but never before one like this. The words of his text were these: 'Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jeru-

salem.' As he proceeded in the elucidation of the text and in the application, it seemed that every word was exactly adapted to my case, and intended for me. Every sentence smote me. A tremor at length seized on my whole frame; tears streamed from my eyes; and, utterly unable to restrain myself, I cried aloud.

"On the following Sabbath I again went to Mr. O.'s church, when he took special notice of the young stranger, and gave me an invitation to visit him on the next day. I complied with the friendly request, with some reluctance it is true, but was received with such unaffected tenderness and love, and addressed with so much solicitude for my salvation, that my heart was won."

The following is the description of his person by Henry Boehm, as he appeared at the conference of 1800: "In person he was tall, being six feet high, with a noble frame, and a commanding appearance. He had a thoughtful, open countenance, full of benignity, and a dark-bluish eye that was very expressive. In reading the lesson he used spectacles, which he would take off and hold in his left hand while speaking. He had a high forehead, a double chin with a beautiful dimple in the center. His locks were gray, his dress parsonic."

There are three independent pictures of him.

The one representing him in a study-cap was ever tenderly loved by those that witnessed the last years of his ministry. The one usually seen in lithograph form represents him at the age of twenty-seven. The third picture was made in 1810, for Peter Hoffman, one of his elders. This is the picture given in this volume. Aside from these three pictures, there is a photograph of a wax bust, giving a profile view. All of the pictures substantially agree, the differences, for the most part, resulting from difference in age, position, or dress. All are good.

The work of Mr. Otterbein has already been presented in its various phases and outlines. This is not the place to enlarge upon the importance and greatness of the work that was put in motion by him. Let it suffice to say that up to the time of his death, nearly or quite one hundred preachers had been raised up and introduced into the work of preaching a living gospel, and that the movement had already extended over large parts of several great states, finding its way many hundred miles beyond the field of Mr. Otterbein's personal labors. That he stood at the head of this great work, as far as the same was brought under a common form, no one can doubt.

It is a fact not to be ignored that in his last years many troubles came to his heart in view of

the position and course that he had been led to take. The fact that he stood in his old age sundered from dear and venerable historic associations wrung from him the deepest anguish that it is possible for the heart to feel. His sorrow was not the bitterness of repentance over mistakes into which he had been precipitated. His sorrow was not over the outcome of his course and efforts, but over the condition of things that had led him, without his planning, into a new and untried way. There is no evidence of even a momentary faltering in his attachment to those that had been led into the revival-movement by him, and to the cause to which they with himself stood committed; but how gladly would he have embraced also all that in earlier times had stood to him as brethren.

In the forced seclusion of his last years he had to fight no ordinary battles. He asked in great anxiety, "Will the work stand, and endure the fiery test?" Within the last year of his life he sent for Christian Newcomer and Jacob Baulus, that he might see them once more, and that he might converse with them on the state of religion and the interests of the church. In conversation with them he said, "The Lord has been pleased graciously to satisfy me fully that the work will abide."

What—as a final judgment—was the chief factor in Mr. Otterbein's life, the key to his character and career? It was not a form of philosophy; it was not a type of theology; it was not enthusiasm. The true explanation of his devoted life and sustained labors is to be found in his deep perception of the moral contrasts presented in the Scriptures. This was the basis; other things rested upon this foundation. He saw men as lost, and, by the widest contrast imaginable, beheld them redeemed. He appreciated the unspeakable difference between a soul unrenewed and a soul renewed. The difference was one of quality, fundamental character—not one of moral shading. Others were thinking of educating a new man out of the old man; he believed in nothing short of a new creature in Christ. By the aid of the Scriptures he read moral truth in its primitive courses. He saw that the difference between unbelievers and Christians must be carried, on the part of Christians, to a joyful and assured knowledge of salvation. He regarded this as necessary not only for the proper joy and comfort of believers, but also as necessary for the triumphs of the church. To deny the possibility of this assurance was to go against the Scriptures, and to cast away the essential consistency of Christianity. Why should not so great a change as that from death

unto life, from the disfavor to the favor of God, have a witness in man's inmost experience? From such preceptions there could be but one result. Could any man have this deep and living view of moral qualities and conditions—qualities and conditions so boldly presented and strikingly contrasted in the Scriptures—and remain an ordinary Christian, or an ordinary force in the work of saving men?

His convictions were deep and powerful, active and unyielding. While he startled and moved others, he himself was deliberate and composed. He had both the courage and the confidence of his convictions, and could therefore afford, when outward display would avail nothing, to possess his soul in peace; and when in action, all of his power could be turned, with no wasting upon himself, directly upon the work to be done.

Mr. Otterbein's place in history is becoming more clear and his name more honored as the years go by. The ideas that he sought to advance are now firmly throned in the heart of the church. The ideas of a conscious experience of the grace of God, a spiritual church-membership, a converted ministry, and the social element in religious life, are no longer the symbols of divisions in the church. But the world does not forget those that won for these ideas their recognized



place. Revivals, the promotion of which required in him a martyr-spirit, have now an open field and the authority of multitudes of the greatest names.

A bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church South recently said, "If Otterbein had preached in the English language he would have headed the general evangelical movement in this country." The remark contemplates, it may be said, more his fitness and position in time, than his disposition toward leadership. Rev. George Lansing Taylor, a Methodist divine, in an ode written in 1875, speaks of Otterbein as —

"Scholar, apostle, and saint, by Asbury loved as a brother;  
Sage in counsel, and mighty in prayer as Elijah on Carmel;  
Founder and head of a people, a godly, fraternal communion."

No fitter conclusion can be given to this attempt to trace the life of Mr. Otterbein than by giving the list of questions and answers, already referred to as forming a part of the Hollingsworth article. The questions were submitted by Bishop Asbury, and the answers were undoubtedly written by Mr. Otterbein's own hand. The answers were given in 1812. They begin with his home in Germany and come down to the very close of his life. The answers are strikingly and admirably characteristic, and to one that has already obtained some knowledge of Otterbein's

life they need no comment. The following is the list:

TO THE REV. WILLIAM OTTERBEIN —

SIR: — Where were you born?

*Answer.* In Nassau-Dillenburg, in Germany.

*Question.* How many years had you lived in your native land?

*Ans.* Twenty-six years.

*Ques.* How many years have you resided in America?

*Ans.* Sixty years the coming August.

*Ques.* Where were you educated?

*Ans.* In Herborn, in an academy.

*Ques.* What languages and sciences were you taught?

*Ans.* Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Philosophy, and Divinity.

*Ques.* In what order were you set apart for the ministry?

*Ans.* The Presbyterian form and order.

*Ques.* What ministers assisted in your ordination?

*Ans.* Schramm and Klingelhoef.

*Ques.* Where have you had charge of congregations in America?

*Ans.* First in Lancaster, in Tulpehocken, in Fredericktown in Maryland, in Little York in Pennsylvania, and in Baltimore.

*Ques.* In what part of the United States have you frequently traveled in the prosecution of your ministerial labors?

*Ans.* In Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

*Ques.* How many years of your life, since you came to this continent, were you in a great measure an itinerant?

*Ans.* The chief of the time since my coming, but more largely since my coming to Baltimore.

*Ques.* By what means were you brought to the gospel of God and our Savior?

*Ans.* By degrees was I brought to the knowledge of the truth while in Lancaster.

*Ques.* Have you unshaken confidence in God, through Christ, of your justification, sanctification, and sure hope of glorification?

*Ans.* The Lord has been good to me, and no doubt remains in my mind but he will be good; and I can now praise him for the hope of a better life.

*Ques.* Have you ever kept any account of the seals of your ministry?

*Ans.* None.

*Ques.* Have you ever kept any account of the members in the society of the United Brethren?

*Ans.* Only what are in Baltimore.

*Ques.* Have you taken any account of the

brethren introduced into the ministry immediately by yourself, and sent out by you? Can you give the names of the living and the dead?

*Ans.* Henry Weidner, Henry Baker, Simon Herre, in Virginia: these are gone to their reward. Newcomer can give the names of the living.

*Ques.* What ministerial brethren, who have been your helpers, can you speak of with pleasure, and whose names are precious?

*Ans.* Geeting, Weidner, Newcomer, and others.

*Ques.* What is your mind concerning John Wesley, and the order of Methodists in America?

*Ans.* I think highly of John Wesley. I think well of the Methodists in America.

*Ques.* What are your views of the present state of the church of Christ in Europe and America, and of prophecy?

*Ans.* In continental Europe the church has lost, in a great degree, the light of truth. In England and America the light still shines. Prophecy is hastening to its accomplishment.

*Ques.* Will you give any commandment concerning your bones, and the memoirs of your life? Your children in Christ will not suffer you to die unnoticed.

No answer was returned to the last question.

This blank, however, was itself truly expressive of his character.

The immortality that he sought he soon afterward gained in the unseen realm. Yet he lives in the memories of the good of earth. May he have in this world, too, a truer immortality than that of a name embalmed in memory,—even that of living in the increased endeavors of many thousands, who, clothed with his spirit, shall carry forward the work that he so nobly began. For this triple immortality—in heaven, in grateful memory, and in an increasing force for good—who would not suffer, toil, and die? Yet in the life of Otterbein, an ulterior object, something beyond any personal end to be gained, is to be discerned, if we would understand his unvarying course, and the proportioned greatness of his character. We must discern as his constant aim the glory of God, and the salvation of undying souls.

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